A Treatiſe, Touching the Li-bertie of a Chri-ſtian.

Written in Latin by Doctor Mar-tine Luther,

And Tranſlated into Engliſh by IAMES BELL.

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To the righte Honourable, and moſte vertuous Lady, Anne, Counteſſe of Warwicke.

AFter I had finiſhed thys ſimple Tranſlation for the behoofe of the vnlettered, ſome of my vvelvvillers conceyuing vvell of the matter, vvere very deſirous that I ſhould preſent the ſame to ſome noble perſonage: others challenging more knovvledge in Courtley affayres, perſvvaded the contrary, being of opinion,

that though it might in ſome reſpecte ſeeme plauſible ynough, yet the preſente beeing but ſimple, could not deſerue to be aduanced to Courte, eſpecially to place of eſtate. And although I ſuppoſed, and partly knevv, that the opinion of the later vvas but vveake in iudgemente: yet loe, it made ſo muche the longer ſtay in deliberation, by hovve muche I vvas abaſhed in conceipte, in reſpecte of my rudeneſſe, and vnaptneſſe, to ſatiſfye the learned, and Courtly eares. Neuertheleſſe, hauing clothed my Stranger in Engliſhe attyre (vvhome I call a Straunger, in

reſpect

reſpecte of the perſon, vvho vvas the fyrſt Authoure thereof.) And vvell knovvyng the Courte, to the greate fame and honoure thereof, by the ſpace of manye yeares novve paſſed, to haue bin the reſcue of all Straungers diſtreſſed, I could not but beleue, that in the Courte, thys Straunger ſo godly, ſo zealous, ſo learned, ſhoulde be both eaſily accepted, and gently enterteyned: and encouraged by thys well knovvē experiēce, I yeelded my ſelfe to the firſte perſuaſion, and fyndyng by generall reporte (Madame) the noble ornaments and gyftes, I ſpeake not onely

of nature, but of godlynes, vviſe-
dome, and zeale, ioyned vvith
ſingular mildneſſe and benigni-
tie, being the fruites of grace a-
mongſt the reſt eſpeciallye, to
ſhine in your ſacred breaſt, I vvas
thereby emboldned to procede,
and aboue all others, to preſume
vpon your honourable patience,
and to preſent to your honoure
this my pore Stranger: In vvhoſe
commendation I dare boldly af-
firme, that there vvas neuer any a
more truſtie ſeruant to his May-
ſter: neuer any of more vndaun-
ted courage in hys Mayſters
cauſe: neuer any that aduẽtured,
or durſt aduenture farther: neuer

any

any that vſed more conſtancie, magnanimitie, and force, in battering the fortreſſes of the enimie: neuer any that pearced deeper, preuayled further, and procured larger , for the ſafetie of poore Chriſtians, ſo many hundred yeares oppreſſed, empriſoned, empouerißhed , yoked, and chayned in miſerable captiuitie, through the monſtrous outrage of that execrable Nimbrod of Rome, amongſt many of vvhoſe exploytes, albeit there can not any one be found, that is not able to repleniſhe the Spirituall and true Chriſtian man, vvith ſuche, and ſo greate ioye, as can not

vvith my penne be expreſſed, yet in my ſimple iudgemente, thys one little treatiſe of his, vvhyche I haue novv aboue all others ſelected to tranſlate, dothe farre excell and ſurmount in ghoſtly conſolation, vvherein are entreated no vayne, childiſhe, or trifling toyes, but ſvveete, delectable, ſerious, vveightie, and matters of great importance, namelye, the pure fayth of a true Chriſtian man, the ioyfull vnion and marriage of the moſt amiable Bridegrome IESV Chryſte, to the poore miſerable abiecte and vvretched Soule, the vvell ordering of Chryſtian lyfe, and

the gladſome Chryſtian free-dome and libertie. Euen ſuche a one is thys my Straunger, vvhome, if it maye pleaſe your Honoure to vouchesafe vnto youre honourable patronage, I ſhall not onelye accompte my ſelfe moſt happy in my choyce, but alſo (acknovvledging your honourable courteſye in full ſatisfaction of myne Engliſhe coſt, ſuche as it is employed) yeelde my ſelfe doubly boun-den and indebted to youre Ho-noure in anye thyng vvhych my penne maye endeauour, or trauell may performe. The holy ghoſt, the Authoure of all goodneſſe,

and ghostly consolation, repleniſh youre hearte vvith the moſt ioyfull freedome of his grace, to the comfort of all ſuch as trauell in the building of Gods holy temple.

(*,*)

Your honoures moſt humble at commaundemente

IAMES BELL.

¶ To *Leo* the tenth, Biſhop of Rome, Martyne Luther *ſendeth greeting in Chriſt Ieſu our Lord.*

AMõgſt the mõſters of thys world, with whõ I haue bene in continuall combate theſe three whole yeares & more, I am enforced nowe at the length to turne mine eyes vnto you, and to haue you in remembrance (O moſt holy father *Leo*) yea for as much as you only be accounted the verye cauſe of this my turmoyle, I cannot chooſe but be alwayes mindefull of you. And albeit I haue bene conſtrained, through inſatiable crueltie of your wicked Sicophants, raging againſte me without deſert, to appeale to the nexte generall Counſel, little eſteming the moſt

vayne

vaine decrees of your predecessours, *Pius* & *Julius*, who of a foolish tirannie haue prohibited such appellation to be made from the See Apostolique. Yet did I neuer mean whiles so estrange mine affection frō your holynesse, but that I haue with all mine hart wished all felicitie and happinesse to you and to your See, and in my daylye prayers with teares and sighes, euen to the vttermost of my power, haue hartilye besought God for the same: But as for those, whiche haue hitherto practised to terrifye mee with the auctoritie and maiestie of your name, I haue now begun almoste to contemne and account them of no force: onlye one thing yet remayneth, whiche I may not despise, which occasioned mee at this present to addresse my letters to your holynesse And this it is, bicause I perceiue that I am accused vnto your holynesse, and very grieuously blamed for my rashnesse, in that I am supposed to haue no consideration of your personage.

The Decrees do prohibite appeale to the generall Councels.

The cause vvhy Luther vvrote these Letters to the Pope.

Wherin, to confesse the truth plainly,

I am priuie in mine owne conſcience, that whereſoeuer behoueth me to make mention of your perſon, I did neuer ſpeak therof without all honour and reuerence: the contrary wherof if I had attempted at any time, I might not haue bene able to iuſtifie, and would by al meanes poſsible haue ſubſcribed vnto their iudgemēts, cōceiued of me herein, and withall would haue applyed to nothing more willingly, than to make open recantation of this my temeritie, and miſdemeanour in that behalfe: I haue named you a *Daniel* in *Babylon*: and your notable innocencie with howe earneſt affectiō I haue defended againſt your ſlaunderous enimye *Syluester*, euery reader doth ſufficiently vnderſtand, namely, that the opinion and report of your vnreprouable life, reſoūding in each coaſt throughout the whole world, by the teſtimonie of ſo many & ſo notable perſonages, is more famous and renoumed, thā that it may be impeached by the ſiniſter practiſe of anye man, though neuer ſo great a potentate. I

Hovv Luther behaued himſelfe towvards the Pope.

am not so voyde of reaso as to defame him whom all men commende, so also haue I bene euer of this minde, not to seeke the defacing of any one, though otherwise infamous by report of al others: for I reioyce not at another mans bleimish, who am my selfe a sufficiente witnesse to mine owne conscience, of mine owne great beame, in mine own eye: nor cā be the first that may caste a stone at the woman taken in adultrey.

In deede I haue accustomed my self to inueigh againste wicked doctrines, somewhat sharply: and haue pinched mine aduersaries, not for their licentious liues, but for their irreligious doctrines, somewhat earnestly: whereof it so little repenteth me, that I am fully persuaded, wythout al regarde hadde of mens censures herein, to persеuer in that vehemencie of zeale: enduced herevnto by the exāple of Christ, who according to the same zeale, spared not to call his aduersaries Vipers broode, blinde Hipocrites, and children of the diuell.

VVhy Luther vvas so vehemente against his aduersaries.

uell. So doeth Paule accuſe *Symon Magus* to be the childe of Sathan, full of al fraude and malice. And ſome others he reproueth openly by the name of Dogges, Deceiuers, and craftie Simoniſtes. Of whoſe ſharpe wordes, if nice delicates maye bee admitted Iudges, nothing ſhal bee ſuppoſed more nipping and vnciuill. What can bee more vehement than the Prophetes? certes the maners of our age, are become ſo tender through the furious ſwarme of clawbackes, that wee can no ſooner feele our ſoares a little diſcouered, but wee exclaime forthwith that we are launced: and being not able to cracke the credite of the trueth by any cauillatiō, we flee from hir, condemning hir of curriſhneſſe, impatience, and modeſty. How ſhall ſalt ſeaſon if it be not ſauorie? what auayleth the edge of a ſworde if it can not cutte? curſed is the man that doeth the Lordes worke franduleently. Wherefore I humbly beſeech you (my reuerend *Leo*) vouchſafe theſe my letters for mine excuſe, and withal perſuade your

Paule and the Prophets be sharp againſt the tenderlinges.

The deliciats of our age.

your selfe, that I neuer conceyued anye euil of your personage. Thē also, that I am so affected towardes you, as that I coulde hartely wishe vnto youre Holynesse all felicitie for euer. Moreouer, that I am not at variance with any man, for conuersation of lyfe, but onely touching the onely worde of truth. In all matters else whatsoeuer, I wyll gyue place to others, but the worde, neyther can I, nor wyll I forsake or denye. Who so that iudgeth of mee otherwyse, or hathe conceyued otherwyse of my writings, dothe not iudge truly, nor conceyue thereof aright.

Luthers variance.

But youre See (whyche is tearmed the Courte of Rome, and which neyther you, nor anye man liuing can denye to bee more fylthye than Babylon and Zodome, and as farre foorthe as I can conceyue, growen to most lamentable, forlorne, and moste shamelesse impietie) I haue detested indeede, and haue taken it very greeuously, that the people of Christ

The Court of Rome.

should

ſhould be deluded vnder the countenance of your name and your holineſſe, and vnder the pretence of the Churche of *Rome*: and herein haue reſiſted, and will reſiſte the ſame, as long as the ſpirite of Faith ſhall liue in me: not bycauſe I dare thinke to atchieue impoſsibilities, or that by mine onely endeauour, I maye hope for anye amendement in this moſte confuſely diſordered *Babilon*, being circumuented with ſuche a rable of brainſicke blaunchers: But bycauſe I doe acknowledge my ſelfe indebted to my poore brethren, whoſe ſafetie I oughte to regarde, that the loſſe of them that periſhe maye be abridged, or at the leaſte leſſe infection may ſpreade abroade from thoſe Romiſhe botches. For theſe manye yeares nowe *Rome* hathe ſurrounded the whole worlde with nothyng elſe, (wherof your holineſſe is not ignorãt) but with vtter deſtruction of al thinges, of bodies, of ſoules, and with moſte peſtiferous paterns of al mõſtrous wickednes:

VVhat ſtuffe ha iſſued fro Rome in the vvor

which doeth rage at this daye in the sighte of all men, more manifest than the Sunne in midday: And the Church of *Rome* which was sometime the most holy of al other, is become the most licēcious den of theeues, the moste shameleſſe Brothelhouſe of all the worlde, the kingdome of sinne, Death, and Hel, in so much that it passeth al reach of man to deuise any abhomination, that is not haunted there, no though Antechriſte himselfe were come.

The Church of Rome.

In the meane time you (right reuerend father *Leo*) sit as a Lambe in the middest of Wolfes, as *Daniel* amiddest the Lions, and are with *Ezechiel* conuersaunte with Scorpions. How can you alone be able to withstand all theſe monsters? Garde your personage with three or foure Cardinals excellent in all learning and moste vertuous in manners: what shall this handefull doe amongst so great a troupe? you shall all be sooner swallowed vp with poyson, before you maye dare attempte anye reformation. The Court of *Rome* is vtterly vndone,

the

the wrath of God is bente againſte it euen for euer and euer. It hateth counſels, it feareth to be reformed, it is not able to reſtrain the furiouſneſſe of hir impiety : and it accompliſheth the prophecie of hir mother, of whome it is written on this wiſe : We haue chearifhed *Babilon* and ſhee is not recouered, let vs forſake hir. In deede it belonged to you, and your Cardinals, to haue cured thoſe plagues : but this goute ſcorneth the Phiſitions drugges, and this carte wil not go driuen nor ledde. Moued therfore with remorce, herein I ſorrowed alwayes (righte reuerende *Leo*) bycauſe you were enſtalled Pope in this wicked age, whoſe worthineſſe deſerued a better time: For the Courte of *Rome* is not worthye to be poſſeſſed of you, and ſuche as you are, but rather of Sathan himſelfe, whiche in truth doth raigne in this *Babilon*, more thā you. Oh woulde to God you coulde contente your ſelfe rather with ſome priuate benefice, or with your parents patrimony, renouncing this portlyneſſe, wherewith

Sathan raigneth Rome no the Pope

those flatterers your moste detestable enimies doe vaunte you to bee glorious, with whiche glorie none are meete to bee glorified, but trayterous Iscariotes, the impes of perdition. For what commendation else doe you get in that Palace (my *Leo*) but that by how much anye Treachor is more wicked execrable, so much the more safely he may shrowd him vnder your name and aucthoritie, to robbe men of their money and soules, to heape mischiefe vppon mischief, to oppresse Faith, Truth, togither withall the Church of God? Oh moste vnfortunate *Leo*, doubtlesse inthronized in a moste perillous place of renowme; for I tell you the truth, bycause I doe wiih well vnto you: For if *Bernarde* toke compassion of his welbeloued *Eugenius*, when as yet there was some better hope of the See of *Rome*, (though then also it was filthily emperious,) whereof may we complaine first, who haue weltered these three hundred yeares nowe in stench and destruction? Is not this true, that vnder the whole outstretched

Eugenius was Pope, sometimes choller into Bernard.

ſtretched face of the heauens, there is nothing more cõtagious, more piſtiferous, & more odious, thã the court of *Rome*? for it is more incõparably execrable, thã the Turkiſh impietie, ſo that true it is indeed, that the ſame which was in times paſt the gate of heauen, is now become a certain gaping gulfe of Hell, and ſo vnſatiable a gulfe, as can not poſsibly be ſatiſfied, the wrath of God being fully bente againſte the ſame. One only comfort remaineth for the pore wretches, if we may be able to reclayme & preſerue ſome fewe at the leaſt, from theſe wide gaping iawes (as I ſayde before.) Beholde (my holy father *Leo*) by what enducement, & by what reaſon I haue inueyghed againſte this chayre of peſtilence: for it is ſo farre off from my thought to grow in outrage againſte your perſonage, as that I would hope to obtaine your fauour, and bee deemed a ſtoute patrone of youre ſafetye, if I woulde manfullye, and valiauntlye cruſhe in peeces the Gates of

One only remedy re mayuing i the corrup Romish Church.

this your dungeon, or of this your Hel rather: for howsoeuer the generall force of al pollicie can possibly imagine to work the vtter ruine of the moste horrible Court of this age, the same shal redounde al to your person, to the preseruation of your estate, and to the safetie of manye others togither with you. Suche as doe worke hir confusion, do execute your function. They doe aduaunce the glorie of Christe, whych doe by all meanes possible detest hir. To conclude, they be right Christians whiche are least Romanistes.

But to speake hereof more at large. There neuer came any suche thought into my heade, as to inueigh against the Court of *Rome*, or to discourse thereof anye thyng at all: For when I perceyued that all preseruatiues were medicinable to procure hir amendement, I withdrewe me from hir, and deliuering hir a libell of diuorce, I spake vnto hir in this wise: He that is filthy, let him continewe in his filthinesse stil, and he that is vncleane, let him continewe

newe in his vncleaneſſe ſtill, yeelding my ſelfe ouer to the calme and quiete ſtudie of holy Scriptures, whereby I might be able to profite my brethren dwelling rounde about me. Here now when as I coulde very little auaile, Sathan beganne to open his eyes, and to pricke forward his truſtye ſeruaunt *Iohn Eccius*, a notorious enimye of Chriſte, ſwelling with a certaine outragious licenciouſneſſe of glorie, chalenging me to a combate vnloked for, tripping me for one very litle word eſcaped me vnawares, touching the Supremacie of the churche of *Rome*. This ſame proude prauncing *Thraſo*, fruſhing in his Fuſtian fumes, vanted luſtily that he durſte attempt al things for Gods glorie, and the honour of the holy See Apoſtolique. And being pufte vp with ſaucie malapertneſſe of abuſing your power, made no ſurer accompte of anye thing, than of preſente conqueſte, ſeeking thereby not ſo muche the prymacie of Peters chayre, as his owne primacie peereleſſe amongſt all the diuines of

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this age, for the better atchieuing wherof, hee perceyued that to leade poore LVTHER Captiue, woulde bee not the leaſt brauerie of his triumph, which enterpriſe, bicauſe it hapned vnluckely & contrarie to the exhortation of the fooliſhe Sophiſter, the man waxed incredibly furious: for hee perceyued, that whatſoeuer infamye was rayſed by mee, agaynſte the Romyſhe Churche, was procured by his owne only temeritie and raſhneſſe.

Vouchſafe heere I beſeeche you (righte reuerende *Leo*) that I maye here once defende mine owne cauſe, and diſcouer your verye naturall enimyes: It is not vnknowne vnto you, (I ſuppoſe) howe youre Legate the Cardinall of Saint *Sixtus* dyd deale with mee, an vndiſcrete manne, and vnciuill, nay rather a falſe man: Into whoſe protection when I hadde yeelded my ſelfe and all mine eſtate, for the reuerence that I beare to youre holyneſſe, hee endeauoured not

rdinall
ſtane.

not to conclude a quietneſſe, whyche hee myghte euen wyth halfe a worde haue eſtabliſhed eaſily, when as I then promiſed to keepe ſilence, and put vp my quarrell, ſo that myne aduerſaries might bee enioyned to doe the lyke. But thys glorious man, not ſatiſfyed wyth theſe conditions, beganne to authorize myne aduerſaries, to gyue them free libertie, and to enioyne mee to recante, whyche was no parcell of hys commiſsion. Certeſſe, when heere the cauſe was yet in verye good plighte, through hys immoderate handlyng, it beganne to feſter worſe and worſe, wherevppon, whatſoeuer fell afterwardes, was to bee imputed, not to LVTHER, but to *Caietanes* vndiſcreteneſſe altogyther, who woulde not permitte me to be ſilente, and to remayne in quiet, whyche I dyd at that time moſt earneſtlye deſire, for what myghte I doe more?

arles
ilitius.

After him came *Charles Militius*, and he also Legate of your holinesse, who trauelling manye and sundrye wayes, poasting here and there, forth and backe, and omitting nothing that might appertain to the redresse of the state of the cause, which *Caietane* had rashly and proudly disordered, coulde scarce at the lēgth bring it to passe, (though coūtenanced herein by the moste renowmed Prince *Frederike* the Elector) that hee might haue once or twice some familiar conference with me, where I once againe yeelded to your auctoritie, contēted to holde my peace, not refusing either Archbishoppe of *Tryers*, or the Bishoppe of *Numburgh* to be iudge in the cause, whiche was concluded and obtained. Whiles these matters proceeded thus very orderly, beholde the other, yea, a greater enimye of your estate, *Eccius* rusheth out with his disputation at *Lypsia*, which hee hadde then published againste *D. Conolastadius*, and picking a newe quarrel of the supremacie of the Pope, bendes his shotte againste mee

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at vnwares, and vtterly dissolueth this cō-clusion of Peace. In the meane time *Carolus Militius* attendeth the succesſe, Disputation beginneth, Iudges are choſen: yet neuertheleſſe, hitherto nothing was determined, and no meruaile, foraſmuche as through *Eccius* falſe lying, dissēbling, & falſe packing, all things were ful of vnquietneſſe, abounded in melancholie, and fraughte of all partes with confuſed diſorder, ſo that which way ſoeuer Iudgement were giuen, greter ſtormes would be rayſed: for he ſoughte for Glory, and not for the Trueth. And here alſo I omitted no parte of dutie that behoued mee to do.

And I confeſſe, that this was not the leaſte occaſion of the diſcouerie of the Romiſhe trumperies: yet ſuch as it was, if any offence grewe thereby, it was altogither to be imputed to *Eccius*, which vndertaking an enterpriſe aboue his reache, whiles hee gaped ouer greedilye for his owne glorie, did diſplaye abroade to the viewe of the whole world the infamous eſtate of *Rome*.

This

The flatterer Eccius did hurte the Court of Rome more, than the moſt lightieſt enimie elſe could do.

This, euen this ſame *Eccius* is youre enimie (my *Leo*) or rather the enimie of youre Courte, by whoſe onely example, a man maye learne ſufficiently, that there is none more peſtilent an enimie, than a flatterer, for what gayned hee by hys blaunching elſe but a miſchiefe, whyche no earthly Kyng nor Potentate coulde bryng to paſſe? for the name of the Romiſhe Courte dothe ſtincke nowe ouer the whole Worlde, and the Papane authoritie is very muche craſed, notorious ignorance is generally cryed out vpon, whereof wee ſhoulde not haue hearde anye one worde at all, if *Eccius* had not turmoyled the peace agreede vppon betwixte *Charles* and mee, whyche nowe hymſelfe perceyueth playne ynough, all too late, and in vayne, ſtorming agaynſte the imprinting of my Bookes. Thus muche behoued hym then to haue thoughte vppon, when lyke a wilde vntamed Colte, hee raunged wholly for glory, and when hee ſought naught elſe

but

but hys owne aduancemente, vnder the couloure of your holyneſſe, to your maruellous detrimente and danger: notwithſtanding, the fooliſhe vayne man hoped, that I would haue ſurceaſſed, and kepte ſilence, being afraid of the ſounde of youre authoritie (for of his witte and learning, I doe not beleeue, that hee was ſo foole hardie) and now perceyuing that I haue taken courage, and my writings ſcattered abrode too muche, beeing all too late ſory for his vnaduiſed wilfulneſſe, he doth vnderſtād, that there raigneth one in Heauen, who reſiſteth the proude, and caſteth downe the haughty of mind, if at leaſt yet he conceyue ſo much.

Therefore, when as by this our diſputation, nothing was wroughte but a greater confuſion of the Romiſh cauſe, *Charles Militius* maketh nowe his thyrde repayre to the elders of the order, beeyng aſſembled in the Chapter houſe, deſyreth aduiſe howe to qualifye the contention, whyche was euen nowe growen to

greate

great trouble, and wonderfull perill: from whom (for as much as there was smal hope nowe to ouerthrowe me, Gods mercie assisting me) some of the graueſt personages were sent vnto me, to intreate, that I wold haue consideration of the estimation and honour of your holyneſſe, and that I shold in humble letters, excuse both your innocencie, and mine owne, declaring that the matter was not yet growen to so dispaired a case, as to bee without hope of recouerie, if *Leo* the tenth woulde of his natural inclination to lenitie, vouchsafe his ayd therto: here nowe as one that hath alwayes both offered, and wished for tranquilitie, that I maye the better applye my selfe to more quiete, and more profitable exercise, whereas I had so vehementlye turmoyled my selfe to this ende, that in mightineſſe and force, as wel of wordes, as courage, I mighte suppreſſe the insolencie of them, whom I perceiued to bee farre vnequal to match with me, I did not only yeelde willinglye, but with ioye also and thankefull minde,

minde, imbraced the requeſt, as a moſt acceptable benefite, if it maye proue according to our expectation.

In this minde I come nowe (oh holy father) and falling proſtrate at your feete, do moſt humbly beſeech you to graunt your aſsiſtaunce herein, and to reſtraine (if it be poſsible, the outrage of theſe flatterers, the very cankers of Vnitie, though masking vnder the vizor of peace. But to wiſhe me to reuoke that which I haue written (moſt holy father) it booteth not for any man to hope for, vnleſſe he be deſirous rather, to haue the matter to be more largely blown abroade.

Luther vvil not recal any thing.

Moreouer, I doe not allowe theſe lawes concerning the interpretation of Gods word to be reſtrained to the church of *Rome*, or tyed to anye place, for as much as the word of God (whych teacheth freedome of all thinges elſe) ought not to bee ſtraighted, and abridged of his freedome. Theſe two conditions reſerued, there is elſe nothing but that I can both doe, and ſuffer:

He vvil not ſuffer the theeues to make lavvs for interpreting Gods vvorde.

ſuffer: yea, will moſt willingly yeelde vnto. I doe late hate contention: I wyll challenge no man, and I will not be challenged agayne, but if I be teazed, I will not holde my tong in my mayſter Chriſt hys behalfe, for it is an eaſie matter for youre holyneſſe to commaund ſilence, and quietneſſe on both partes, the quarrells being ſummoned before you, and determined, which I haue alwayes deſired earneſtly to heare.

...ſuncelleth the Pope not to heare flatterers.

Beware therefore (my holy father *Leo*) that you hearken not to theſe enchanters, which make you not a naturall man, but halfe a God, and would enduce you to beleeue, that ye are able to commaunde, and exact whatſoeuer you liſt. It will not bee ſo, neyther ſhall you preuayle, you are the ſeruant of ſeruants, and placed in the moſt dangerous eſtate of all others. Let them not beguile you, which imagine you to be the Lorde of the Worlde, whiche will not permitte any man to be a Chriſtian man, vnleſſe he be ſubiecte to youre authoritie,

which

which do chatter and iangle, that you are of power to commaunde in Heauen, in Hell, and in Purgatory. Thoſe, euen thoſe be your enimies, and ſeeke the deſtructiō of youre ſoule, as the Prophete Eſay doth witneſſe, O my good people, ſuche as doe prayſe thee, euen thoſe doe deceyue thee. They are out of the way, which do extoll your maieſtie aboue the Councell and vniuerſal Church. They are out of the way which do inueſt you onely in the right of interpreting Scriptures, for ſuche doe practiſe to eſtabliſhe in the Churche all theyr owne inipieties, vnder your name. And alas for woe, by the meanes of thoſe perſons, Sathan hath preuayled much in your predeceſſors. To be briefe, beleeue none of them that doe magnifye you, but ſuche as do humble you, for this is the iudgemente of God, *He hathe throwen downe the mightie from their ſeate, and hathe exalted the humble and meeke.* Beholde what inequalitie there is betwixt Chriſt and his ſucceſſors, when as they all notwithſtanding will be accompted Vicares of Chriſte. And I feare

much, leaſt many of thē be his Vicares in deede a great deale too earneſtly: for a Vicar is he that dothe preſente the perſon of his Prince being not in place. Now, if the Pope do beare dominion whiles Chriſte is not preſent, nor reſiant within his hearte, what is he elſe, than the Vicar of Chriſte? But what manner of Churche is that then elſe, but a rude multitude without Chriſt? And what maner of Vicar is this elſe, but *Antechriſt*, and an Idol? How much more truly ſpake the Apoſtles, who named thē-ſelues the ſeruants of Chriſt being preſent, and not Vicares of Chriſt being abſent.

What a Vicar is.

Peraduenture, I ſhall be accompted a ſhameleſſe fellowe, that dare preſume to teach ſo mighty a potentate, from whome all others oughte to be inſtructed, and frō whome all iudiciall Courtes oughte to fetch definitiue ſentence (as youre peſtiferous clawbackes do arrogantly vaunt) but I followe the example of *Bernarde*, in hys Booke entituled *De conſideratione ad Eugenium*, a neceſſarye Booke for all Popes to knowe by heart. Neyther doe I take thys

vpon

vpon me of any greedy desire to teach, but of dutieful affection, in a pure and faithfull zeale, which doth enforce vs to be afrayde euen of the most plausible things in our neyghbours: and being altogither exercised in the perils and profites of other men, will not admitte any respect to bee had of the worthy or vnworthy: for in as much as I knowe, that your holynesse is troubled, and tossed at *Rome* that is to saye, in the maine Sea, of all sides enuironed aboute with infinite daungers, and that you swimme nowe in succourlesse waues miserably, as that you stand in need of the meanest helpe of anye your poorest brethren: I iudged it a point of no great absurditie, if I did lay aside the remembrance of your maiestie for a tyme, vntil I had executep the dutie of Loue. I will not flatter in so weyghtie and perillous a cause: in whiche doing, if I bee not conceiued to bee most frendly, and most humble vnto you, there is one that doth conceiue and iudge.

To conclude, bicause I would not seeme to come emptye handed vnto your holy-

neſſe, I bring with me this little Treatiſe, publiſhed vnder your name, as a pledge of truce to be cõcluded, and of good ſucceſſe: wherein you maye ſomewhat conceiue in what kinde of ſtudies I can, and am verye deſirous to employ my time, more fruitefully, and commodiouſlye: if I heretofore might, or hereafter may now conueniently be free from your wicked flatterers. The matter is ſmall, if you regarde the outward coate, but if you comprehende the thing it ſelfe, it is (if I be not deceiued) a moſt notable patterne of a Chriſtian life, briefely cõpiled. Neither haue I ought elſe being a poore mã to gratifie your holyneſſe withall, neyther neede you anye other preſent, than ſpirituall conſolation wherewithall I doe recommende my ſelfe wholy to your fatherhood, & holyneſſe. Which I beſeech Chriſt Ieſu to preſerue for euer. Amen.

At Wittemberge the ſixt of September in the yeare of our Lord. 1520.

¶ A Treatise of Martyne Luther touchyng Christian libertie.



Many men haue bene of opinio that Christian faith is an easie matter, yea of them also not a fewe haue accompted it in the number of Vertues, euen as a companion of vertue it self. And this haue they done, bicause they haue had no tryall therof by any proofe, nor haue at any time tasted of what force & power it is: whereas it cannot be possible that any man may be able to wryte pithilye, or vnderstande effectuallye the thinges that are written concernyng the same truely, vnlesse being pinched at some one tyme or other wyth some crosse of tribulation, he haue felt the inward spirite thereof: But who so hath had but a meane tasse of the same, can neuer possiblye be satisfied with wrytyng,

speakyng, thinkyng, and hearyng thereof. For it is a liuelye spryng vnto euerlastyng lyfe, accordyng as Christ calleth it in the fourth of John. Wherein my self albeit I make no vaunte of my store, and withall doe acknowledge the weakneſſe of myne imbecilitie, yet doe neuertheleſſe truſt, that by meanes of sundry and grieuous temptations wherewith I haue ben turmoyled, I haue attayned no small dramme of Fayth. And that I am thereof able to treate (though not so eloquently, yet certes more substantiallye) than those litterall and ouer subtill schoolemen haue hitherto yet disputed, as men altogither ignoraunt in the things which themselues haue written. To the ende therfore I may discouer a more easie waye to the vnlettered to wade herein (to whose capacities I doe only applye my selfe) I do set downe first these two propositions touchyng the freedome and bondage of the spirite.

John. 4.

1 *A Christian man is a most free Lorde of all, subiect to none.*

2 *A Christian man is a most dutifull seruant of all, subiect to all.*

The propositions.

Although these two propositions seeme to be meare contraries, yet when they shall be founde to haue in them a certeine sweete agreement, they will auayle very much for our present purpose. For Sainct Paule is the Authour of them both, namely in his first Epistle to the Corinthes the twelfth Chapter, Being otherwise free, I made my selfe seruant of all. And in the thirteenth to the Romains. Owe nothyng to any man, but that ye loue one another. But loue is naturally dutifull, and humbly obedient to the thing that is loued. Euen so Christ, though Lorde of all, yet beyng borne of a woman, was made vnder the lawe, both free altogither, and a seruaunt, at one selfe tyme in the shape of God, and in the shape of a seruaunt.

1.Cor.ix. Rom.xiii.

Let vs enter into some hygher & more
déepe consideration of those sayinges.
Man doeth consist of two natures, to
witte, spirituall, and corporall. In re-
specte of the spirituall nature (which some
doe tearme to be the soule) he is called
Spirituall, inwarde, and of the newe
man: In respect of the corporall (which
some call the flesh) hée is called the car-
nall, outwarde, and the olde man. Of
the whiche the Apostle in the seconde to
the Corinthians the fourthe Chapiter.
2. Cor. 4. Although our outwarde man be corrup-
cap. tible, yet our inwarde man is renued day
by daye. So that it commeth to passe
through this diuersitie, that in the scrip-
tures two contraries are affirmed of one
selfe same man, bycause that these two
men beyng within the same one man, do
kéepe continuall battayle agaynst eche
other, Whylest the flesh doeth couet
agaynst the spirite, and the spirite against
the flesh, as in the Epistle to the Ga-
5. Cha. lathians the fifth Chapiter.

First

In vvha things Christian libertie.

Fyrst therefore let vs examyne the inwarde man, and see by what reason hée maye be made iuste, frée, and a true Christian, that is to saye, spirituall, newe, and an inwarde man: And it is certayne, that no externall thyng at all (howe glorious tytle so euer it beare) is in anye respecte auaileable to the attaynyng of Christian ryghteousnesse, or frédome, as neyther of anye value to the procuryng of vnryghteousnesse or bondage, whyche is prowed by a very easie demonstration. For what auayleth it to the soule, if the bodye be in good lykyng, healthie and full of lyfe: If it eate, drynke, and doe frélye what it listeth, when as euen the moste wicked abiectes, bondeslaues of all mischiefe, doe enioye the same: Agayne, what losse doeth the soule susteyne by sickneesse, imprisonment, scarsitie of foode, thirst, or by anye other externall disaduauntage, when as the very reprobate, & suche as be cleare voyde of all good conscience, are

molested wyth the same. None of all those externall casualties doe extende to the frædome, or bondage, of the soule. In lyke manner it shall be to small purpose, if the bodye be garnished with gay Coapes, suche as Prieſtes doe weare, or be conuersaunt in holye sanctuaries, or be exercised in holye Masse and Mattens, or if it praye, faste, absteyne from certayne meates, or doe enure it selfe to what so euer exercyse wrought and possible to be wrought by the bodye and in the bodye. To the frædome and ryghteousnesse of the soule is requisite matter of farre greater importaunce, whereas those externall thynges aforesayde, maye happen vnto the most wycked, by practisyng of the whiche, they become no better than playne hypocrytes. Contrarywyse, it shall nothing preiudice the soule, to haue the body clad wyth vnhallowed garmentes, to frequent prophane places, to eate and drynke

of

of all sortes of meate wythout choyse, not to bleate out prayer by note, yea to passe ouer all those workes aforesayde whiche maye bée perfourmed by the verye Hipocrites.

Be it also that wée reiecte al things, yea euen speculations, meditations, and whatsoeuer maye bée done by the endeuour of the soule, it profiteth nothynge. One thyng, yea and that onelye and alone is néedefull to the attaynement of lyfe, ryghteousnesse, and Christian libertie, whiche is the sacred worde of GOD the Gospell of Jesu Christ, accordyng to the Testimonie of Christe hym selfe in the eleuenth Chapiter of John. I am the resurrection and life, hee that beleeueth in mee, shall not dye for euer. And in the eyghth Chapiter of John. If the Sonne make you free, you shall bee truelye free. And in the fourth Chapiter of Mathewe. Man liueth not by bread only, but by euery word that

Gods vvord necessary for the soule.

Iohn vi.

Iohn.8.

Math.4.

procedeth out of the mouthe of God. Lette vs therefore take this for a strong and an vndoubted Bulwarke, that the soule maye wante all thynges excepte the worde of GOD, without the which nothyng in the worlde can preserue hir in safetie: But hauyng the worde, shée is ryche, destitute of nothyng, for as muche as the worde of GOD is the worde of lyfe, of lyght, of peace, ryghteousnesse, saluation, ioye, frée-dome, wysedome, power, grace, glo-rye, and inestimablye the treasure in-comparable of all goodnesse. And this is it that moued the Prophete in all his Dctonarye and in manye other places, wyth so many deepe sighes and gronings to shritche out and to call vpon the worde of God. Againe, neither is there any more horrible a plague of Gods wrathe, than whiles he sendeth famine of hearing hys word. As he speaketh in Amos: as neither is there any greater grace than if he spred abroad his word, as is specified in the 107. Psalme.

auid.

mine of ods vorde an rrible gue. nos.

Psalm. He sent his word, & healed them, & deliuered them from their destruction. Neyther was Christe sente to anye other ministerie, than the ministerie of ỹ word, nor is the Apostolicall Bishoprike, and whole order Ecclesiasticall, called and instituted otherwise, than to the ministerie of the word. Psalme. 107

But thou wilt demaunde, what worde of God is this, and after what manner must it be vsed, considering there be so many wordes of God? I aunswere, the Apostle in the firste to the Romanes dothe expresse the same, namely, the Gospell of God concerning his sonne incarnate, crucifyed, risen agayne, and glorifyed by the holy Ghoste the sanctifier. For Christe hath preached, that is to saye, hathe fedde the soule, hath iustifyed, deliuered, and saued the soule, if she beleeue his doctrine, for Fayth onely is the safe and effectuall vse of Gods word, as to the Romanes the tenth. If thou confesse with thy mouth, and beleeue with the heart, that GOD Rom. 1. Rom. 10.

VVhich is the vvord of God.

D.v. hath

hath rayſed him from the dead, thou ſhalt be ſaued. And againe, The end of the law is Chriſte vnto righteouſneſſe to all them that do beleeue. And to the Romanes the firſt, The iuſt man ſhall liue by his owne fayth, for the word of God can not be comprehended and embraced by any workes, but by faith only. Euen ſo it is manyfeſt, that as the Soule hathe néede of the only word, to obteyne righteouſneſſe and life, euen ſo it is iuſtifyed by onely faith, and no workes, for if it might be iuſtifyed by anye other meanes, then ſhoulde it not ſtande in néede of the worde, and ſo conſequently no néede of faith. But this fayth can not conſiſt altogither with workes, that is to ſaye, if thou preſume to be iuſtifyed togither with workes whatſoeuer they be, for this were euen to halte on both legges, to worſhip Baall, and to kiſſe the hande, whiche of all other is abhominable, as witneſſeth Iob. Therefore, when thou begynneſt to beléeue, thou doeſt learne withall, that all things in thée

are

are altogither blamewoꝛthy, ſinfull, and damnable, accoꝛding to that ſaying of the Apoſtle in the ſecond to the Romanes, Al haue ſinned, and haue neede of the glory of God. And to the Romanes. 3. There is none that dothe good, all haue declined out of the way, they are altogither become vnprofitable, foꝛ if thou knowe this once, thou ſhalte knowe that it is neceſſary foꝛ thée to holde faſt Thꝛyſte, that beléeuing on him, who hathe ſuffered foꝛ thée, and is riſen agayne, thou mayſt be made another man thꝛough this fayth, béeyng made frée from all thy Synnes, and iuſtifyed by the merites of Jeſu Thꝛyſt onely. Rom. 2.

Therefoꝛe, foꝛ as muche as this fayth can not beare dominion in anye, but in the inwarde man, accoꝛding to the teſtimonie of Paule in the tenth to the Romanes, With the heart we do beleeue vnto righteouſneſſe And foꝛ as much as this faith onely doth iuſtifie, it is euident that the inwarde man can not in anye wyſe Rom. 10.

Man is not iustifyed by any externall thing.

be iustified, made frée, and saued by anye externall worke or exercise, and that workes whatsoeuer, auaile nothing thervnto, as on the contrarye through impietie, and only vnbeliefe of the heart, mã is made giltie, and the bondslaue of sinne, and not by anye externall sinne or worke. And therefore the first and principall care of euery Christian man ought to be in this especially, that setting aside all vayne confidence of workes, he strengthen hys fayth more and more, and by daily increasings grow in knowledge, not of workes, but of Christ Iesu crucifyed for him, and risen agayne, as Peter in the last of hys firste Epistle teacheth, for as muche, as none other worke doth make a true Christian man. So Christe in the sixth of John, when the Iewes asked a question what they should doe to doe the workes of God: excluding the multitude of workes, wherewith he perceyued them to swell, and puft vp in pride, did prescribe vnto them one onely rule, saying, This is the

1. Epist. Petr. Cap. vlt.

worke

worke of God, to beleeue on him whome he hath sent, for him God the father hathe sealed. From hence right faith in Chryst duly procéeding, is a treasure inestimable, conteyning in it selfe all saluation, and preseruing from all euill, as in the last of Marke, He that beleeueth and is baptised, shall be saued, he that beleeueth not shall be damned, which treasure Esay inwardly regarding, did in the tenth of his Prophecie say, The decréed consumption ouerflowеth with righteousnesse, and the Lorde of hoastes shall perfectly fulfill the thing that he hath determined in the middest of the whole world, as if he had sayd, Faith whiche is a briefe and summarie fulnesse of the Lawe, shall replenishe the beléeuers with so greate righteousnesse, that they shall not haue néede of any other helpe to atteyne righteousnesse: and the same dothe Paule testifie in the tenth to the Romanes, For with the hearte we beleeue vnto righteousnesse. But thou doest aske by what meanes it commeth to passe

Iohn.6.

Fayth a treasure inestimable.

Marke.16.

Rom.10.

passe, that faith only may iustifie, & gyue such a treasure of so great gwdnesse without wozkes, séeing that the whole Scriptures doe pzescribe vnto vs so mãny wozkes, so many ceremonies, & so many laws: I do answere, aboue all things be mindful of this chiefly that hath bin spoken of befoze, to witte, ỹ only faith without wozks doth iustifie, doth deliuer, and dothe saue, which we will make mozе manifest hereafter. In the meane time seale vp thys, that the whole Scripture of God is deuided into two bzanches, namely, commandements, & pzomises. In déede the cõmandemẽts do teach gwd things, but ỹ things that are taught by thẽ are not fozthwith perfozmed, foz they do pzonoũce what we ought to do, but do not giue power to doe the same, but are institituted to this ende, to discouer mã to himselfe, by meanes whereof, man may know his own disabilitie towards the gwd, and so dispaire of his own strength: and foz this cause they are called the old Testament, and so they be indéede.

The Scriptures haue commandements and promises.

As

As for example, Thou shalt not couet, is a cõmandement, by the which we are conuinced all to be sinners, bycause man cannot chose but couet, whatsoeuer his endeuour be to the contrary. And therfore, that he may not couet, & so cõsequently fulfill ỹ cõmandemẽt, he is cõpelled to dispaire of himself, & to seeke elsewhere for help of an other, which he is not able to find in hymselfe, as Osee saith, Thy destruction commeth of thy selfe O Israell, and thy health only frõ me. The obseruatiõ of which one cõmandement, is generally to be obserued in all ỹ rest, for all ỹ cõmandemẽts are in all respects alike impossible vnto vs, & beyond our reach. Now whẽ man is taught his owne weakenes by ỹ cõmandemẽts, & thereby brought into perplexitie, howe he may be able to accõplish ỹ law, knowing ỹ the law must be so of al parts accõplished, ỹ no one iote so much or title thereof may be pretermitted otherwise in danger of eternall damnatiõ irrecouerable, being thẽ truly humbled, and embaced to naught in

Osee.

All the commandemẽts be equally impossible to be accomplished by vs.

The Law must be satisfyed.

his

his owne eyes, he findeth nothing in himselfe, whereby he maye be iustified, and come to salvation. Lo, héere commeth the other braunch of the Scripture, namely, the promises of God, whiche do bring the glad tidings of the glory of God, & speake on this wise, If thou wilt fulfil the Law, and not couet as the Lawe requireth, beholde héere a remedie, Beléeue in Christ, in whome be promised vnto thée, grace, righteousnesse, peace, frédome, and in whome thou shalt haue all things if thou beléeue, and withoute whome thou shalte lacke all things if thou do not beléeue, for that whiche is impossible to thée in all the workes of the Law (whiche be many, and yet vnavaylable to saluation) thou shalte very easilie, and briefely atchieue and bring to passe through faith, bycause God the father hathe so established all things in faith, that whosoeuer haue faith, maye possesse all things, and whosoeuer lacketh fayth, may possesse nothing, for God hath shut vp all things vnder vnbeliefe, that he might

VVe ac-complish al by fayth.

Rom. 11.

might haue mercy on all. On this wyse the promises of God doe giue freely vnto vs, that which the commaundementes do exacte of vs perforce, and doe fulfill that, which the law doth straytely commaund: that so all things may belong vnto God only, as well the commandements, as also the performance of the same. Onely God commandeth, only God performeth, and therefore Gods promises haue relation to the new Testament, yea rather are the new Testament it selfe.

God only commaundeth, and perfourmeth.

For as much therefore as the promises of God be holy wordes, true, iust, peaceable, and full of all gwdnesse, it commeth to passe, that the soule whiche doth cleaue stedfastly to the same, with an vnshaken faith, is become so vnited vnto them, yea is also wholly so swallowed vp of them, that it doth not only partake thereof, but is throughly gorged, and made drunken with all the power and force of the same: for if the touching of Christe did gyue health, how much more shal a very tender

The firste arme of fayth.

fæling of the woꝛd in the ſpiꝛit: nay rather a thꝛough ſwallowing downe of the woꝛd, communicate to the ſoule all things that apperteine to the woꝛde. By this meanes therefoꝛe, the Soule thꝛough faith onely without woꝛkes, beléeuing in the woꝛd of God, is iuſtifyed, ſanctifyed, pacifyed, deliuered, and repleniſhed with all goodneſſe, and it is truly made the daughter of God, as it is ſayd in the firſt of John, He gaue thē power to be made the ſonnes of God, euen them that do beleeue in his name.

Joh. 1.

By this it may be eaſily perceyued, frō whence faith hath receiued ſo great foꝛce, and why neyther anye one, noꝛ all good woꝛkes are comparable vnto hir, beeauſe no woꝛke cā cleaue faſt vnto Gods woꝛd, noꝛ be within the ſoule, wherin faith only, & the woꝛd, do reigne & gouerne, foꝛ ſuch as ỹ woꝛd is, ſuch becōmeth the ſoule, made by foꝛce of the woꝛd, euen as a firie plate of yꝛon dothe glimmer lyke vnto fire, by meanes of vniting the fire and the plate togither, ſo that it is manifeſt, that to a

Chriſti-

Christian man faith sufficeth only for all and that he nedeth no workes to be iustified by. Now if he nede no works, thē also he nedes not the law: if he haue no nede of the lawe, surely he is then free from the law. So this also is true. The lawe is not made for the righteous man, and thys is ẏ same christian libertie. Our faith whiche dothe worke in vs, not to be idlers, nor to giue our selues to lust and euill life, but that we be not tyed to a necessitie of obseruing the law, or doing workes, to ẏ end to obteine righteousnes, or saluation therby. Let this be the first arme of faith, & let vs see another, for this also is the dutie of faith, that it reuerence him on whome it beleeueth, with a most godly and earnest bent affection, to wit, that it accompt him true, & worthy to be beleeued, for there is no honor like vnto the opinio conceiued of truth and righteousnes, wherewith we do most highly estéeme of him whome we doe beleeue, for what are we able to ascribe to any person, more thā truth, righteousnes, &

Another arme of fayth.

The greatest honour.

godnesse, of all partes perfecte and absolute: Contrarywise, it is a detestable reproche, to conceyue a secrete opinion of a man, to be false, faithlesse, and wicked. So the Soule, as long as it beléeueth stedfastly in God that maketh the promise, doth accompt him true & righteous, than which opinion can nothing be more acceptable to God. This is the highest honor of God, to ascribe vnto him truth, iustice, & whatsoeuer else ought to be yéelded to hym whome we do beléeue: this man yéeldeth himselfe ready to execute all his will: this man doth sanctifie his name: this man suffereth himselfe to be exercised, according to the wil & pleasure of God, bycause cleauing firmely to his promises, he doubteth not but that he is true, iust, wise, & wil do, dispose, and gouerne all things for the best: but is not suche a soule by the same his faith most humbly obedient to God in all things: what commandement remayneth then, which this obedience hathe not sufficiently satisfied: what fulnesse can be

The greatest reproch

Perfect obedience.

more

more absolute, than all maner of humble obedience: but this obedience cõmeth not by workes, but by faith onely, and beléeuing the promises. On the other side, what Rebellion: what impietie: what greater reproche can there be vnto God, than not to beléeue him whẽ he promiseth: for what is this else, than eyther to make God a lier: or to be doubtfull of his truth: that is to say, to ascribe truth to himselfe, and to condemne God of vanitie & lying: wherein doth he not deny God, and make to himselfe an image of hymselfe in hys owne heart: what auayle déedes (I praye you) wrought in this vnbeliefe: though they séeme neuer so Angelicall, or Apostolicall: And therfore very well did God cõclude all, not in wrath & lust, but in vnbeliefe, least suche as faine that they haue fulfilled the law through chast and méeke workes of ỹ law (such be vertues humane and ciuill) shoulde presume vpon their saluation, when as being shut vp in the sinne of vnbeliefe, they must eyther séeke for

Rebellion

mercy, or to be damned through iustice. But whē God doth sée truth to be ascribed vnto him, & that he is worshipped with the faith of our hearte, with is as much honor as he deserueth, then dothe he honour vs againe, & imputeth vnto vs truth & righteousnes for this faithes sake: for faith, in yelding to God his owne, doth work truth & righteousnes, and therfore God doth recōpence our righteousnes again with glorie, for it is true & iust, that God is true & iust. So also, to ascribe vnto God iustice & truth, & to cōfesse ỹ same, is to be true and iust. To this effect we reade in the .1. of the Kings, the .5. Chapter, Whosoeuer dothe honor me, I wil glorify him: and whosoeuer doth despise me, shal be naught set by. The same also pronounceth Paule to the Romanes, the .4. Chap. That to Abraham his owne faith was imputed vnto righteousnes, bycause through the same he gaue vnto God ỹ glory most absolutely, & that if we beléeue, faith shal be imputed for the same cause vnto vs for righteousnes. The

God dothe honoure them that beleeue on him.

1. King. Cap. 4.

Rom. 4.

third

third arme of faith, which is a iewell ineſtimable, is this, that it coupleth the ſoule with Chriſte, euen as the ſpouſe with hyr huſband. By which ſacrament (as Paule teacheth) Chriſte & the ſoule are made one fleſh. If they be one fleſhe, then is there a true mariage betwixt them, yea rather, a mariage of all other moſt perfecte, abſolutely accompliſhed betwixt them (for the mariages betwixt man & wife be but ſlender figures of this vnion) wherupon it followeth, that al things are cõmon betwixt thẽ, as well good as bad, ſo that whatſoeuer Chriſt doth poſſeſſe, the faithful ſoule may boldly preſume vpon ẏ ſame, and triumph ouer them, as though they were his own. Likewiſe, whatſoeuer apperteineth to the ſoule, ẏ ſame may Chriſt chalenge vnto himſelfe, as if they were his owne. Let vs cõpare theſe togither, and we ſhal perceyue ineſtimable treaſure. Chriſte is ful of al grace, life, and ſauing healthe, the ſoule is fraught ful of all ſinne, death, and damnation. Now let faith come betwixte

The third arme of fayth.

The vniting of the ſoule vnto hir ſpouſe.

Behold ineſtimable treaſures.

these two, and it shall come to passe, that Christe shall be loaden with sinne, wyth deathe, and with hell, but vnto the soule shall be inputed grace, life, and saluation, for it behoueth Christe, if he be the husbande, to accepte, and ioyntly possesse the things apperteining to his spouse, and withall, to communicate to his spouse the thyngs that apperteyne to his possession, for he that giueth vnto hir his bodye, and himself wholly, how can it be, but that he must giue hir all things else withall? and he that is possessed of the spouse, how doth he not withall possesse also the things appertayning to the Spouse? Heere commeth loe to the view, a most sweete spectacle, not onely of communion, but of a comfortable battell of victorie of saluation and redemption.

For in as muche as Christ is God and Man, and suche a person, as neuer yet sinned, neuer dyeth, nor is damned, yea, suche a one, as neyther can sinne, nor dye, nor be damned, and that his iustice,

his

his lyfe, his sauing health, is vnvanquishable, euerlasting and omnipotent, when as (I say) suche a person doeth communicate to hym selfe, yea rather doeth wedde (as his owne) the sinne, death, and damnation of hys Spouse through the weddyng Ryng and vnion of Fayth. And that the case nowe standeth none otherwyse, than as if they were his owne proper peculiar, euen as if hym selfe had sinned, were trauellyng, dying, and descendyng into hell, to bryng all thinges in subiection: And that sinne, death, and hell, coulde not swallowe hym, beyng all of necessitie cleane swallowed vp in hym by a miraculous conflict (for his righteousnes is greater than the sinnes of all men: his lyfe surmounteth in power all death, his sauyng health is more victorious than all hell) euen so the faythfull soule, through the assuredneſſe of hir Faith in Christ hir husbande, is deliuered from all sinnes, made safe from death, garded from hell, and endowed with the euerlasting righte-

teousnesse, life, & sauyng health of hir husband Christ. On this wise Christ doth cople hir vnto him selfe a glorious Spouse without spotte and wrinckle, clensing hir with the foũtaine in the word of life, that is to say, through faith the word of life, of righteousnesse, and of saluation. Euen so doth he marry hir vnto him selfe in fayth, in mercye, and compassions, in iustice and iudgement, as he testifieth in the seconde of Osée.

ose.2.

The Maiestie of this spiall marage.

Wherefore who is able to value the roialtie of this mariage accordingly: who is able to comprehend the glorious riches of this grace: where this ryche and louyng husbande Christe dothe take vnto wyfe this poore and wicked Harlotte, redéemyng hir from all euilles, and garnishyng hir with all hys owne Jewels. For it is impossible nowe, that hir owne sinnes shoulde destroye hir, sithens they are layde vpon Christes shoulders, and swallowed vp in hym, sithens also it doth nowe possesse the same ryghteousnesse in

hir

hir husbande Christ, of the which she may nowe embolden hir selfe, and presume vpon them as in hir owne right agaynst all hir owne sinnes, agaynst death and hell, and may with confidence encounter the enimy, and saye, if I haue sinned, yet my swéte husbande Christ, in whome I doe belieue, hath not sinned, all whose ryches are mine, and all mine are his: As in the Canticle of Salomon. My welbeloued husbande to mee, and I vnto him. This is it that Paule speaketh of in the first to the Corinths ỹ fiftenth Chapiter. Thanked be God which hath giuen vs victorie through Iesus Christ our Lord: Euen the victory ouer sinne & death. And in ỹ same place he bringeth in, that sinne is the sting of Death, but the force of sinne is the law. *Cor.1.the Chapiter*

Hereof therefore you doe vnderstande agayne, what the cause is that faith is so highly commended: that it is able alone to fulfill the law, & to iustifie without any helpe of workes: For thou doest perceiue how ỹ first commaundement, Thou shalt worshyp *For vv cause is so m esteem*

The true worshyp of God.

worshyp one God only, is now accomplished by Fayth only: For if thou were nothing els frō ẏ sole of ẏ foote to the crowne of the head but good workes, yet shouldest thou not be iust, nor shouldest thou worshyp God, nor fulfill the first commaundement, for as much as God cannot be worshipped, vnlesse the prayse and glorie of all trueth and all goodnesse be truely ascribed vnto hym: but this can not workes bring to passe, only the fayth of the harte must atchieue this. For we doe glorifie and confesse him to be true, not by working but by belieuyng. In this respecte Fayth onelye is the ryghteousnesse of a Christian man, and the accomplishment of all the Commaundementes: For hẏ that doth accomplish the first Commaundement, doeth fulfill all the rest with no labour at all. For workes being thynges without sense, cānot glorify God, though they may be practised to Gods glorie, being ioyned with Fayth. But we at this present, enquire not the workes wrought,

of

of what qualitie they be: but we doe enquire of the person that maketh the workes, that glorifieth and bringeth forth the workes. And the same is the very Fayth of the harte, the heade and substance of all our righteousnesse: whereupon it followeth, that the doctrine that teacheth the satisfaction of the law by meanes of works, is blinde and perillous, for as muche as before all works, it behoueth that all the Commaundements be accomplished, and that workes doe followe after this fulfilling of the lawe, as we shall heare more at large afterwardes.

Faith maketh vvorkes.

But to the ende we may more manyfestly beholde this grace whiche this our inwarde man doth possesse in Christ, it is to be obserued, that in the olde Testament God did sanctifie to him self the first borne of euery mankinde, & the first birth was wonderfully estéemed, surmountyng all other in double honour: Namely in the priesthode and in the kyngdome, for the first begotten brother was Priest & Lord

The prerogatiue of the first birth.

of

of all other: vnder whiche shadow Christ was prefigured vnto vs, the true and onely first begotten of God the Father, and of the virgine Mary, and the true Kyng and Priest: but not according to the flesh and the world, for his kingdome is not of this worlde, he raigneth and sanctifieth in spirituall and heauenlye thinges, which are righteousnes, truth, wisdō, peace, saluatiō. &c. Not as though all things of this world and of hell, were not also in subiection vnto him (otherwise howe coulde he preserue and defende vs from them all) but bicause his kingdome doth consist neither in them nor of them. Euen so neither his Priesthode doth consist in outward pompe of apparell and gestures (suche as the humaine Priesthode of Aaron was, and as our ecclesiasticall Priesthode is at this day) but in spirituall things, by the which he doth make intercession for vs vnto God the father in heauen, by a certaine inuisible office, aud there doth offer vp him selfe, and perfourmeth all thinges that behoued a

Whereof e kyng- me of rist doth nsist.

ists esthood.

Priest

Priest to doe. Euen as Paule doth describe him by a figure of Melchisedech in hys Epistle to the Hebrues. Neither doth he only praye, and make intercession for vs, but also doth teach & instruct vs, inwardly in spirite with the liuelye doctrine of his spirit, which two are ỳ peculiar properties of a Priest, which also is figured in carnall Priestes by prayers & visible preachinges. Priestly office. Paule to the Hebrues.

And euen as Christ by his first birth did obtaine these two dignities, so doth he emparte and communicate the same to euery his faithfull spouse, by the ryght of the forsaid mariage, wherby they are all spouses, whosoeuer are espoused to ỳ husband. And hereof commeth it, that we al that beléeue in Christ are Priestes and Kinges in Christ, as in the first of Peter the seconde Chapiter. You be a chosen kindred, a people of adoption, a kingly priesthood, and a priestly kingdome, to thende you shoulde shew forth his power, who hath called you from darknesse, into his maruellous lyght: which two are thus to be taken. How it is to be take that fayth full Christ ans be Priestes. 1. Peter. Chap. 2.

First

First as concerning the kyngdome, e-
uery faithfull Christian through Fayth
is so aduanced aboue all other things, that
in spirituall power he is become Lorde o-
uer all, so that none of all the creatures
can do him any harme at all: May rather
all things are made subiect vnto him, and
compelled to serue for his safetie, accor-
ding to the testimony of Paule in the eight
to the Romaines. All thinges doe worke
togither to the elect vnto good. Likewise
in the first to the Corinthians the thirde
Chapiter. All things are yours, whither it
be lyfe or death, things present, or things
to come, but you are Christes. Not that
to euery Christian, all prœminence is gi-
uen in bodily power to possesse and rule o-
uer all things (which furious frensie hath
bewytched manye our Prelates euerye
where) for thys dominion is proper to
Kynges, Princes, and Potentates of the
earth: whereas the verye vse and maner
of our lyues, doeth sufficiently teache vs,
that we are subiect to all, that we doe en-

dure

dure many tribulations, yea & euen die the death. Naye rather, by howe much a Christian doeth excell in Christianitie, by so much the moze is he subiect vnto all incõueniences, vexations, and deathes, as we may easily sée in the very flower of the first bozne Christ him selfe and all his holy bzethren. This power is spirituall, whiche doth beare dominion euen in the middest of enimyes, and is mightie euen amiddest the very toztures, which is nothing else in effecte, but that power is made perfecte in weakenesse, and that in all thinges I may make gaine foz my saketie: insomuch, that the crosse and death it selfe maye be compelled to serue foz my behoofe, and to wozke my saluation: and this is that high and notable dignitie, yea that true & omnipotent power, the spirituall kingdome, wherein nothing is so good, nothing so badde, which shall not wozke to my good, so that I beléeue. And yet haue I néede of nothing (sithens only Fayth doth sufficé to saluation) but that faith may in the saine

The spirituall kingdome.

exercise hir force, & the dominion of hir li-
bertie. Behold now this is that inestima-
ble power and libertie of Christians.

We be
Priestes for
er.

So also we be not only most frée kings of
all other, but we be Priestes also for euer,
which doeth farre surpasse all kingdoms:
For through our Priesthood we are made
worthie to appeare before God, to pleade
and pray for other men, & one to instructe
the other the thinges that are of God. For
these be the offices peculiar vnto Priests,
which can in no wise be committed to any
vnbeléeuer. Suche a prerogatiue hath
Christ obteyned for vs, that as ioynt bre-
thren, coheyres, and ioyntkinges, so also
we should be vnto him ioyntpriestes, pre-
suming boldlye with confidence through
the spirite of Faith to preace vnto the pre-
sence of God, and to crye vnto him Abba
Father, and to pray for eche other, and to
doe all things ý we sée to be executed & fi-
gured by the visible and corporal function
of the Priestes. But vnto the vnbeléeuer
nothing serueth or worketh vnto God, but

hinges
to the
lee-

hée

he is become seruaunte of all other, to whom all things turne vnto euill, bicause he doth wickedly employ all his endeuour for his owne behoofe, and not to the glory of God. And by this meanes he is neither Priest but prophane, whose prayer turneth vnto sinne, nor doeth appeare before God, bicause God doth not heare sinners. Wherfore, who is able to comprehend the preheminence of Christiā dignitie: which through hir owne kingly power executeth dominion ouer all things, ouer death, life, sinne. &c. and which through hir priestlye glory is able to worke all things in ỹ sight of God, bicause God doth bring to passe ỹ things for the which he doth pray & wish, as it is written, He shall worke the will of them that feare him, & shal heare their petitions, & shal saue them. To this glory surely is no possible accesse by workyng, but onely by fayth and beliefe.

By the premisses may euery man easily perceiue, by what means a Christian man is free from all, and Lorde ouer all: The li tie of C stians.

so that to become iust and saued, he shall not néede any worckes at all, but throughe faith only obtaineth all those things sufficiently: who if he woulde be so mad as to presume to be made a iuste, a frée, and a safe Christian, by force of any good worck, he should surely lose his faith forthwyth, togither with all his good workes, which follye is aptlye moralized in that fable of Esope, where the Dogge swimmeth in the water, & carrying flesh in his mouth, deluded with the shadow of the same flesh glittering in the water, whyles gapyng with open mouthe he snatcheth after the shadowe, he both loseth the true flesh, and the shadowe withall.

Héere you wyll aske of mée, If all be Priestes that bée in Christes Church: by what tytle then maye they (whome wée call commonlye Priestes nowe) be discerned from Laye men? I doe answere: There is a great iniurye committed agaynst these wordes, to wytte, Priest, Clarke, Spirituall, Ecclesiasticall,

astical, whyles they be translated from al the rest of the Christians, and be abridged to these fewe, which through euyll custome are tearmed Church men: For holy scripture doth make no difference betwirt them, sauing that it entituleth thē by the names of Ministers, Seruantes, and Stewardes, whiche doe nowe vaunt them selues to be Popes, Bishoppes, and Lords, whiche ought to minister to others in preachyng the worde, to teache the fayth of Christ and Christian libertie: For albeit this be true, that wée be all Priestes indifferently, yet can we not all nor yet ought we al minister & teach publiquely though we were all able to do so: For so doth Paule teach in his first to the Corinthes the fourth Chapiter. Let men so esteeme of vs, as ministers of Christ, and Stewardes of the misteries of God. 1. Cor. 4.

But this Stewardshyp is now enhaunced vnto so mightie a Potentate & pompe of power, and vnto a certayne terrible tyranny, that no kyngdomes of the Gen- To vn... issue th... minist... Eccles... call is come.

tiles, ne yet anye Empyres of the whole worlde are not able to counteruayle the same in statelinesse. As though lay people were a certaine somewhat besides and no Christians at all. Through whiche peruersenesse it is come to passe, that the true knowledge of Christian grace, Christian faith, and Christian libertie, yea of Christ him selfe, is come wholly to vtter ruyne, whiles in the meane space an importable clogge and intollerable bondage of mens workes and traditions are crawled vp in his place, and we (according to Jeremies lamentations) are become vassalles of the moste vilest varlettes of the worlde, whiche doe abuse our miserye to worke all infamous filthinesse, and shamefull reproches of theyr beastlye lycentiousnesse.

How Christe ought to be preached.

But to returne to our purpose agayne. I suppose that by the foresayd demonstrations it is made manifest, that it sufficeth not to a true Christian man to preache the workes, lyfe, and doctrine of Christ,

after

after an historicall manner, and vtter the same as in tellyng of tales, as though to knowe them to be patternes of framyng our lyues, were enough (lyke as they vse to preache whiche are now accompted the beste) muche lesse if it bée vtterlye concealed, and in stéde thereof mens constitutions and traditions bée taught to supplye the place. There be some nowe a dayes, and they not a fewe, whiche to this purpose doe preache and teache Christe, that they maye moue the affections of the people to bewaile the Passion and tormentes which Christ suffered, and to be displeasaunt agaynst the Iewes, and suche other childishe and fond matters of no great importaunce. But Christ ought to be preached to this ende, that Fayth in him maye increase, that it maye appeare, that it is not enough, that there is a Christ, but that he maye be a Christe (whiche is a Sauiour) vnto thée and vnto mée: And that he doth worke the same in vs, which is mēcioned of him, & is

agréeable to the name whereby he is named: which fayth springeth, flourysheth, and is preserued by this, if the preaching doe notifie the cause wherefore Christe came, what he brought with him, what he gaue, and to what vse and purpose he is to be embraced. And this commeth to passe, where Christian libertie (whiche we doe obtaine by him) is truely taught: and by what meanes all we Christians are Kynges and Priestes: wherein also wée be Lordes ouer all: and vpon what this our assyaunce (that whatsoeuer we doe is well pleasyng and acceptable to GOD) is grounded, as I haue sayde before.

The fruite of true preaching.

For whose hart hearyng these things will not melt for very ioy, and waxe rauished in loue of Christ, hauing receiued so great a consolation: to the which loue he can neuer possibly attayne by anye lawes or workes at all: what is hée that can hurte suche a heart, or may appall the same with feare? If conscience

of

of sinne doe rushe vppon him, or horror of death amaze him, loe, it is readye to trust in the Lord, nor is afrayd for any suche euil noyse, nor is disquieted, vntil it doe despise the enimies, for it beléeueth, that Christes righteousnesse is become hys owne righteousnesse, and that his sinne is nowe no longer his owne, but Christes sinne. But it behoueth that all sinne bée swallowed vp at the very sight of Christ, through the faith of Christ, as hath bene declared before, and learne nowe wyth the Apostle, to treade vpon, and triumph ouer sinne and death, and to say, Deathe, where is thy sting? Death, where is thy victorie? the sting of Death is sinne, but the power of sinne is the Lawe. God be thanked, who hathe giuen vs victorie through Iesus our Lord, for death is swallowed vp through the conquest, not of Christ only, but our owne also, bycause it commeth to passe by oure Faith, that the conquest is made oures, and that in the same we doe ouercome.

Let this suffice touching the inwarde man, touching hys frēedome, & touchyng the principall righteousnesse of Fayth, which neyther nēedeth lawes nor workes whiche will turne to his destruction that dare presume to be iustifyed by them. Now let vs returne to the other parte, to witte, the outward man: For in this treatie aunswere shall be made to all them, who bēyng offended with the worde of Fayth, and with the thyngs that haue bene spoken of before, doe replye on this wise agaynst vs. If Faith doe accomplish all thyngs, and if Fayth bē onely and alone sufficiente vnto righteousnesse, to what ende then are wē commaunded to doe good dēedes? we maye goe play vs then, and worke no working at all, beyng furnished sufficientlye wyth fayth, I doe aunswere, Not so yee vngodly, not so. In dēede thys matter woulde euen so fare, as you say, if we were perfectly and altogyther the inwarde and spirituall men: whyche wē can not bē in any wise, be-

The demaund of them vvhiche do not conceyue Luther, yea rather vvhich doe not conceyue vvhat fayth is.

fore

fore the last day at the rising again of the dead. So long as wée be clothed wyth thys mortall flesshe, wée doe but beginne and procéede outwarde in oure course towardes perfection, whyche will bée consummated in the lyfe to come. And for thys cause, the Apostle in the eyghte to the Romanes, dothe call this the firste fruites of the Spirit, whiche we do enioy in this life, the tenth and fulnesse of which spirit, we shall receyue in the life to come. To this belongeth that whereof we spake before, namely, that a Christian man is seruannte of all, and subiecte to all, for in thys that hée is frée, hée worketh nothyng, but in thys, that hée is a seruante, hée worketh all things. Nowe lette vs sée howe these two wyll stande togyther. Albeit man bée sufficiently iustified by fayth in the inward manne Spiritually, as I sayde before, enioying all that hée oughte to haue, sauyng that hée muste by dayly encreasings enlarge thys same Rom. 8.

Faith,

faith, and riches of grace, vntill he be vn-clothed of this flesh, yet remayneth still in this mortall life, vppon the face of the earth, wherein he must of very necessitie nourish his owne body, and be conuersant amongst men. And euen héere now works doe begimne to take their entrance. Héere we may not giue oure selues to idlenesse. Héere now we must apply our selues earnestly to exercise this body with fastings, watchings, labours, and other moderate disciplines, to bring it in subiection to the spirite, that it maye become obediente to faith, and conforme it selfe to the inwarde mā, & that it rebel not, nor hinder ỹ spirit, following therein his owne naturall inclination, if it be not otherwise tamed: for the inwarde man being alike fashioned vnto God, and created after the image of God, through faith, is both ioyfull, and cōfortable, for the loue he hath to Christ, in whome he is endued with so many good things, wherevppon in this only dothe it occupie it selfe, namely, to serue the Lorde with

From vvhence vvorkes take theyr beginning.

The only vvorke of the invvard man.

with a free loue, with ioy, and thankes.

Nowe whiles it is exercised in thys course, behold in hir owne flesh it findeth a contrary will, which trauelleth altogither to serue the worlde, and to seeke the things that are hir owne, which the spirit of Faith cannot away withal, nor is able to endure it, and therefore with valiante courage attempteth to subdue and tame this rebellious wil, as Paul witnesseth in the seuenth to the Romanes, I am delighted with the Law of God in mine inwarde man, but I see another Lawe in my members, rebelling againste the lawe of my mind, and leading me captiue into the law of Sinne. And in another place, I do chastise my body, and bring it into subiection, leaste whiles I preache to others, I my selfe may be found a castaway. And in the fifth to the Galath. They that are of Christe haue crucifyed the flesh, and the concupiscences thereof. Rom. 7. Galath. 5.

But neyther we may do these workes in any wise, being of the opinion that mā may

Of what mind we ought to be in doing good workes.

maye bée iustifyed thzough them in the sight of God. Foz this false opinion is not tollerable in ỹ eye of Faith, which Fayth is the onely righteousnesse befoze God. But in these wozkes wée must bée of the mynde so to bzyng the flesshe into subiection, and to cleanse the euill concupiscences thereof, that it may not bend the view of the eye to anye thyng else, than to the moztifying of euill concupiscence and lust: Foz when the Soule is washed cleane thzough Faith, and made the dearling of Chzyste, it woulde also desire that all things else, yea, and hir owne body chiefely myght bée purged togyther wythall, to the ende all things in hir mighte loue, and glozifie God togithers, whereby it commeth to passe, that man thzough an enfozcing necessitie of the flesh, may not giue himselfe to idlenesse, for that cause is constreyned to do many good things, to the end he may bzing hys body into subiection. And yet these wozks are not of suche power, as to be able to

wozke

worke mans iustification before God. But man of a very pure loue, doth worke the same, to the seruice and obedience of God, beholding in them nothing else than Gods good will, vnto the which he would most willinglye and dutifully yéelde all humble obedience in all things.

By this meanes euery man may easily direct himselfe, howe he ought most orderly (as the saying is) and most commodiously attemper his owne bodye, for héé shall fast so muche, watche and laboure so muche, as shall séeme most expedient, for the taming of the wantonnesse and licentiousnesse of his body. But those that doe vaunt to be iustified by workes, do regard not ỹ mortificatiõ of ỹ flesh, and the lustes therof, but the workes thẽselues, being of opiniõ, that if they do very many, & great good déedes, they are therby in good case, & are become iust therewith: sometime hurting the braynes, and destroying nature vtterlye, or at least making it vnprofitable. And this is a wõderful folly, & grosse igno-

Howe the body ought to be chastised. Note.

ignorance of Christian life, and of Christian faith, to haue a will to be iustified and saued by workes without faith.

A notable similitude.

But to the end that which we haue said may more easily be conceiued, let vs make demonstration therof by similitudes. The workes of a Christian man being iustified and saued through his owne faith, by the meere and free mercy of God, ought to be of none other value and estimation, than the workes of Adam and Eue, and al their children should haue bin in Paradise if they had neuer sinned, of whome God spake in the seconde of Genesis on thys wise, God did place man, whome he created, into Paradise, that he mighte worke and manure the same. But God created Adam iust and perfect, and without sinne, so that he shoulde not haue nede to be iustifyed and made perfect by any his owne worke, endeauour, and saf keeping. But to the end he shoulde not be ydle, God enioyned him this worke, to manure Paradise, and to keepe it, which workes had

Genes 2.

bin

bin truly most frée, wrought in respecte of nothing, but of Gods good pleasure onely, and not to procure righteousnesse therby, wherewith he was fully endued already, and which also should haue bin ioyntly in the creation of vs all.

To the same effecte be the workes of the faithfull beléeuer, who through hys owne faith béeing restored againe into Paradise, and created againe of new, néedeth no workes to become, or made iust thereby. But bycause he shoulde not bée idle, but manure his owne body, and kéepe it, he must do suche workes of frédome in respecte of Gods good will onely, sauing that is not yet fully created againe anew with perfect faith and loue, whiche behoueth to be encreased daily, yet not by force of workes, but of their owne strength. Take yet another example. An holy Bishop consecrating a Church, Byshopping children, or executing some other parcell of his function, is not himselfe consecrated a Bishop by force of those exercises,

Fayth doth restore into Paradise.

Another example.

G. nay

nay rather vnlesse he had bin a consecrated Bishop before, none of al these works coulde haue bin to anye purpose, but accompted rather childish, altogither folish and apish. Euen so a Christian man, bée ing firste consecrated by his owne fayth, doth worke good workes in déede, yet is he made thereby neuer a deale the more holy, or the more a Christian, for this is the worke of faith only, yea rather, vnlesse he did first beléeue, and were a Christian before, all his workes would not be worth a straw, but rather very wicked, and damnable sinnes.

And for this cause these two sayings bée true, namely, Gods workes doe not make a good man, but a good man dothe make the workes to bée good. And euill workes doe not make an euill man, but an euill man dothe make the workes to be euill, so that it behoueth alwayes, that the substance or person be good firste, before al good workes, and that good works follow then by order, and procéede from a

Two notable sayings.

good

good person, as Christe hymselfe witnesseth, An euill tree dothe not bring good fruite, and a good tree dothe not bryng euill fruite . For it is euidentlye knowen by experience, that the fruite dothe not beare the trée, and that the trée dothe not growe in the fruite , but contrarywyse , the trées doe beare the fruites, and the fruite dothe growe in the trées. Therefore , as it is necessarie that the trée bée firste before the fruite, and that the fruite dothe not make the trées good or euill : But contrarily, such as the trée is, suche is the fruite, so is it necessarie, that the person, or man himselfe be eyther good or badde firste, before he make a good or bad worke, and that his workes make him neyther good nor badde, but the man hymselfe maketh his owne workes good or badde.

Semblable hérebnto may we sée in all occupations. An euill house or a good house dothe not make an euill or a good Carpenter, but a good or bad Carpenter maketh Another example

maketh a good or badde house. And so generally in all kindes of manuell occupations and sciences, no péece of worke dothe make the Artificer good or badde, but such as the Artificer is, such worke maketh he, euen so fareth it in the case of mẽs works. Such as the person is either in faith or in vnbeliefe, such is his worke, if either done in faith, and so good, or done in vnbeliefe, & so euill. But contrarywise, it is not so, to witte, suche as the worke is, suche is the person, made in faith or vnbeliefe, for as workes doe not make a man to be a beléeuer, so neyther do they make a man righteous. But Faith, as it maketh mã beléeuing and righteous, so dothe it make hys workes to be good. For as much therefore as workes doe not iustifie any man, and that it behoueth man to be righteous before he worke any good worke: it appeareth most manifestly, that faith onely by the méere mercy of God, through Christe Iesu in his word, doth make worthy, and sufficiently iustifie, and saue the person:

faythiustify.

and

and that a Christian man nédeth no worke nor law at all, thereby to atteyne saluatiõ, for that through Faith he is frée from all lawe, and dothe frélye worke all things that he worketh of his owne mére good will, respecting therein neyther profite, nor saluation, but only the good wyll of God, for as much as he is nowe alreadie fullie replenished, and made safe by the grace of God through hys owne faith.

Euen so no good worke auayleth to righteousnesse and saluation to the vnbeléeuing person. On the other side, no euill worke maketh him euil or damnable, but his owne vnbeliefe, whiche both maketh the trée euill, and withall, maketh the workes euill and damnable, wherevppon in this, that anye person is made good or badde, he doth not receiue this being good or badde by workes, but this his good or euill taketh beginning from the rote of faith or vnbeliefe, as the wise man recordeth, The beginning of sinne is to fall frõ

The vnbeleeuing person is not made euill by vvorkes.

God, which is in effect, to be vnbeléeuing.
And Paule in the. 11. to the Hebrues, It
behoueth him that commeth to GOD, to
beleeue. The same also speaketh Christe,
Eyther make the tree good, and the fruite
thereof good, or make the tree euill, and
the fruite thereof euill, as if he might say,
who so will make good fruites, must begin
at ỳ tree first, and plant vpon a good stock, so
who so wil make good workes, must begin,
not at the working, but at the beléeuing,
whych beléefe doth make ỳ person good, for
nothing maketh the person good, but faith,
nor any thing maketh him euill, but vnbe-
liefe. In déede this is true, that by workes
man is made good or euill in the iudgemẽt
of men, but this is as much in effect, as to
do it to vnderstande, and let it be knowen
who be good, or who be euill, whereof
Christe speaketh in the seauenth of Ma-
thewe, You shall knowe them by theyr
fruites. But this knowledge consisteth
onely in shewe, and outward appéerance
and semblance, wherin many are deceyued
that

hrues, 11.

Yorkes
make a
an good,
t that is
the sight
men.

ath. 7.

hat presume to teach and prescribe, wher-
by men maye be iustified in the meane
time, making not once so muche mention
of Faith at all, masking still in their owne
mismaze, alwayes deceyued, and deceiuing
others, going forwarde from worse vnto
worse, blind guides of the blind, wærying
themselues with a multitude of workes, & yet neuer atteyning to true righteousnes, of whom Paule writeth in the 1. to Timo. the. 3. Chap. Hauing in dede an vtter shew of holinesse, but denying the power ther-
of, alwayes learning, but neuer atteyning
to the knowledge of the truth. Therefore behoueth him ỹ will not wāder out of the way, with these blind guides, to enter into a dēeper cōsideratiō, thā the vtter shew of workes, of lawes, & doctrines of workes, but must rather with a quite contrarye aspecte pry's into the person, and note di-
ligently the reason, wherby man is iustifi-
ed: and héere shall hée finde, that man is iustifyed and saued, not by workes, nor by the lawe, but by the worde of God.

The original of some mens errour. 1. Time. 3.

that is to say, by the promise of his grace, and by faith, that so the glory therof may redound to the maiestie of God, Who hathe saued vs that beleeue, not by the workes of righteousnesse whiche we haue done, but according to his owne mercye, through the worde of his owne grace.

ales to derstand e doc- ines of any.

Wherby it remaineth easie to be knowen in what respect gods workes are to be reiected or embraced, & in what sense all ỹ doctrines of men touching workes ought to be vnderstanded: for if workes be compared to righteousnes, and be practised by a peruerse Leuiathan, and of that false persuasion, to presume vpon ỹ obteyning true iustification therby, they do now enforce a necessitie vnauoideable, & do vtterly extinguish libertie & faith withall, and so euen by this meanes are now no more good, but méerely damnable, for they be not nowe frée, but blasphemous to the grace of God, whose onely propertie is through faith to iustifie and saue, which thynges workes doe affect to bring to passe, not of

any

any their ability, but by a wicked folehar-
dineſſe only, iſſuing from our owne groſſe
ignorauunce: by reaſon whereof they doe
violently ruſhe, and entrude into the office
of grace and the glorie thereof. For this
cauſe therefore wee doe not reiecte gods
workes, but rather doe moſt hartely em-
brace and teache them: Neither doe wee
condemne them in reſpect of them ſelues,
but in reſpecte of the wicked addition gi-
uen vnto them, and peruerſe opinion con-
ceiued of them, in thattayning of right-
ouſneſſe: whereby it commeth to paſſe,
that they appeare good only in ſhewe, be-
yng not good in deede, and in truth, there-
by being them ſelues deceiued and decey-
uing others alſo as rauenyng wolues clo-
thed in ſhæpes ſkinnes.

The reaſ
of Luther
Doctrine.

And this Leuiathan and peruerſe opi-
nion in workes can not poſſibly be reclay-
med, where pure fayth wanteth, nor is
remoueable from theſe holye workemen
before that Fayth the vanquiſher thereof
come in place and beare dominion in the

The vvo
of Leui
than.

heart. Nature is not of it selfe forcible inough to expell it, no not so muche as to take notice therof, but esteemeth it in place of a most holy wil: whereas if custome preuaile, & take déepe roting in this peruersenesse of nature (as is alreadye brought to passe through wicked teachers) it is an incurable disease, and leadeth astraye innumerable people into destruction vnrecouerable. And therfore albeit it be a commendable thing to preach & wryte gloriouslye of repentance, confession, and satisfaction, yet if they surcease here, and procéede no further, euen to ỹ instructing in faith: such doctrine doubtlesse is deceiueable and deuilishe: For euen so Christ with his beloued John did not only say, Repent yee of your sinnes: But added also the worde of Fayth, For, the kingdō of heauē is at hād.

teachers ist ex- re to yth.

For the one parte of Gods word ought not to be preached alone, but both togither must be taught: both newe and olde must be deliuered out of this treasury, aswel the voice of the Lawe, as the word of Grace. The voyce of the Lawe must be vttered,

that

that the people may be terrified, and framed to know their sinnes, and thereby be turned to repentaunce, and amendment of their former lyfe. But here forthwith must not stay be made: for this were only to wounde, and not minister playster: to launce and not to heale: to kill, and not to quicken: to leade vnto hell gates, & not to deliuer from thence: to throw downe altogither, and not to raise vp. Wherefore the word of grace also, & the word of promised forgiuenes, ought likewise to be preched, to instruct & raise vp the faith, without the which in vaine is the doctrine of the lawe, of cõtrition, of repentance, and of al other things also practised and preached.

In déede there remaine as yet certaine preachers of Repentance and Grace, but they doe not disclose the lawe, and the promises of God, in that liuely spirite & force as others capacities may attayne to the true foũtaynes and spring head of Repentaunce and Grace. For Repentaunce procédeth from out the law of God, but faith or Grace doth issue frõ Gods promise. As the

From vvhence repentance or Faith do proce

Rom.10. the Apostle witnesseth in the tenth to the Romaines. Fayth commeth by hearing, but hearyng commeth of the worde of Christ: Whereby it commeth to passe, that man receiueth consolation and is raised vp through Fayth of Gods promyses, who otherwyse through the threatenings and terrours of Gods Lawe, is brought lowe and throwen downe into the knowledge of him selfe. Whereof the Psalmist Psalm.29. in the.xxix. Psalme. Mourning shal dwel vntill the euening, and ioyfulnesse vntyll the mornyng.

Of vvorks towardes our neighbours. Let this suffice to haue bene spoken of workes in generall and of those workes also, which a Christian man doeth exercise towardes his owne body. Lastly, wée wil speake of those workes which ỳ Christian doeth employ to the vse of his neighbour. For man doeth not liue vnto hym selfe only in this mortall bodye, to worke in the same, but to all men generally vpon the earth. Nay rather man liueth only to other men, and not to him selfe: For to this

this ende doeth he kéepe his bodye in subiection, that he may thereby moze sincerely and fréely serue to the necessities of others. As witnesseth Paule in the. 14. to the Romaines. No man liueth to hym selfe, and no man dyeth to him selfe. For he that liueth, liueth vnto God, and hee that dyeth, dyeth vnto God. It is not possible therefoze, that in this lyfe man shoulde be ydle and vnfruitfull towardes his neighbours. Foz of very necessitie he must talke, wozke, and be conuersant amongst men, Euen as Christ made to our likenesse in properties, was founde to bee as man, and conuersaunt amongest men, as Baruch testifieth in his third Chapiter. Rom. 14. Baruch. 3.

And yet he néedeth none of all these to procure righteousnesse and salcation. And therefoze in all his wozkes behoueth him to be so framed in minde, and to direct his whole affection only to minister to the necessities of others, to séeke the commoditie of others, in all his déedes, hauing re-

A Christian must apply hym selfe to all men.

gards

garde to nothyng els, than to the behoofe and profite of his neighbour. For euen so ỳ Apostle cõmaundeth vs to worke with our handes, ỳ we may haue wherewith to releiue the necessitie of our brethren: whereas otherwise he might haue sayd, to haue wherwith to cherish our own bodies: but let him giue (saith he) to him that is in nẽde: For the propertie of true Christianitie is, to regard the state of his own body, to this end, that through health & wel preseruing the same, he may be able to labour to gaine riches, and to employ them to the relieue of the nẽdy. That so ỳ strõg member maye helpe the weake member, and that we maye be the sonnes of God, carefull, and trauelling ech for other, bearing one anothers burthen, and by thys meanes fulfilling the lawe of Christ. Behold here the true Christian lyfe, this is the natural liuely faith, effectuall through loue: that is to saye, when it breaketh forth into the worke of most frée seruice, with ioy & loue, wherin he doth frẽly and of his owne accord, minister to others, re-

To what end the body must be cherished.

The true Christian faith.

knowled-

knowledging it self fully satisfied with the aboundance and riches of his own fayth.

After the same maner when Paule had made euident to the Philippians, howe rich they were made through the fayth of Christ, in ỹ which they had receiued plenteousnesse of all things, he giueth vnto thē another lesson, and saith, If you haue receiued any consolation of Christ, if any comfort of loue, if any fellowship of the holye ghost, fulfil then my ioy, that ye may be al of one mind, & be endued all with the like loue, being a like minded, & thinking al one thing, esteeming nothing of your selues through cōtention or vaine glory, but striuing to excel ech other in humilitie, euery one regarding not the thinges of his owne, but the necessities of others. Loe here by this rule of the Apostle, wée sée playnelye the lyfe of true Christians to consist in this, that all theyr workes be directed to the commoditie of others, for as muche as euery person doeth so much abounde through his owne Fayth, that all other workes, and all his whole lyfe, doth

doeth ouerflowe vnto him, wherewith he may be able to minister vnto, and profite our neighbour, of a frée, and voluntarye good will, and beneuolence.

The deprauers of the Apostles doctrine.

And to this effecte hée exciteth vnto them Christ for an example, saying, Let the same mynde be in you, which was in Christ Iesu, who when he was in the shape of God thought it no robbery to be equall with God. Neuertheleſſe he made him ſelfe of no reputation, takyng vppon him the ſhape of a ſeruaunt, and became lyke vnto men, and was founde in apparell as a man, he humbled him ſelfe & was made obedient euen vnto the death. For this moſt holeſome worde of the Apoſtle haue they hidden in darkeneſſe from vs, which were altogither ignorant in the ſpeaches of the Apoſtle, namelye, The ſhape of God, the ſhape of Seruaunt, apparell and the lykeneſſe of men, and dyd apply the ſame prepoſterouſly, to the natures of diuinitie, and humanitie: whereas Paules meanyng was, that whereas

Christ

Christe was fullye beautifyed with the shape of God, and aboundantlie flowyng with the store of all good things, so that he néeded not any worke, nor any passion to make him righteous and saued (for hée did absolutly possesse all those things, euẽ from the firste beginning of himselfe) yet was he not pufte vp in pryde with these, nor was lift vp aboue vs, nor did chalenge to himselfe a certaine power ouer vs, albeit he might in his owne right haue claymed the same: But contrariwise, did so behaue himselfe in labour, in works, in sufkering, and in doing, that he might be like vnto other men, both in apparell and coũtenance, none otherwise, than as man, euen as if he had néeded all these, and had possessed no parcell of the shape of God: all which neuertheless he vndertoke for our sakes, to the ende he might minister vnto our necessityes, and that all thyngs myght bée made ours, whyche he should bryng to passe in thys shape of a seruaunt.

Christiā ought to conforme himselfe to Christ.

Euen so a Christian man being ful and abounding throughe hys fayth like vnto Christe his heade, oughte to be contented with this shape of God obtayned through Faith (sauing that he oughte to increase the same Faith, as I sayde before, vntill it be made perfecte) for this is the life of man, his righteousnesse, and saluation, bothe sauing the person, making him acceptable, and furnishing hym wyth all thinges whatsoeuer Christe doth possesse, as is before mentioned, which also Paule in the firste to the Galathians doeth confirme, saying: But in this that I liue in the flesshe, I liue in the faith of the sonne of God.

Gala. ii.

And although he be on this wise frée fró all workes, yet in this frédome ought he neuertheless to make himselfe of no reputation, and putte on the shape of a seruaunt, and to become like vnto menne, to be founde in apparell as a manne, and to minister, and to helpe, and by al means possible to worke hys neyghbours commoditie; euen after the selfe same manner

as

as he fęeleth, that God hathe done and daylye doeth for him thorough Christe, and thys also he muste doe *Gratis* wythoute all respecte, sauing in respecte of Gods good pleasure, and euen after this manner muste he thinke vnfainedly.

Beholde my good God hathe giuen vnto me moste vnworthye and dampned caitife, beyond all deserte of his meare and frée mercie, in Christe Jesu all the treasures of righteousnesse and saluation, so that hencefworth I shall not stande in wante of anye thyng at all, but of Fayth, whiche maye firmely beléeue in Christe: Wherefore to this so louing a father, who hathe ouerwhelmed mée wyth these his inestimable riches, why shoulde not I frankely, ioyfully, with all my hearte, and with all my moste louing and willing soule, yélde all seruice whatsoeuer I doe knowe to bée well pleasing, and is acceptable in hys eyes.

The confidence of a Christian man.

Wherefore I will giue my selfe wholye a certain Christ vnto my neyghbour, euen as Christ gaue himselfe vnto me, and wil doe nothing in this transitorie life, but that whiche I shall perceiue to be necessarie, commodious, and profitable for my neighbour, in as muche, as I am sufficiently ynoughe enriched with all good things in Christe through Faith.

The fruite of Faith. Beholde gentle Reader how worthily is Luther reproched.

Lo here out of Faith floweth Loue, & reioysing in the Lorde, and oute of Loue floweth likewise a chearefull, liberall, and frée hearte to minister to the necessitie of thy neighboure, frankely of thy owne accorde, so that here nowe is no consideration hadde of gratitude, or ingratitude, of praise or dispraise, of vauntage or of losse: For neither doeth he apply herevnto to winne the fauour of men, nor maketh any difference betwixt friends or foes, nor respecteth the thankfull or vnthankfull, but mosse frankely and with mosse gladsome cheare doth yélde himselfe wholy, and all that he possesseth, without regarde whether

ther he lose the same in the vnthankful, or employ it on the deseruing: For euen so his father doth, disposing all things to all abundauntly and mosse frælye, making his sun to shine vpon the good and the wicked. In like maner, the sonne doth worke and suffer nothing but of a frée and chearfull ioy, wherewith throughe Christe hée is delighted in God the giuer of so greate and inestimable treasures.

You sée therefore, if we acknowledge all those things which are giuen vnto vs, of greatest and highest price (as Peter sayth) ý forthwith loue is poured abroade in our heartes, by the holy ghost, whereby we are frée, cheareful, omnipotent, doers, workers, and conquerours of al tribulation, seruauntes of oure neyghbours, yet Lords of al things notwithstanding. But suche as doe not knowe the gistes giuen vnto them through Christ, to them Christ is borne in vaine: such wander in the way of workes, and shall neuer attaine to the taste and fæling of those things. Therefore

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foꝛe as oure neighboure is pꝛessed downe with necessitie, and wanteth of our stoꝛe & abundance, euen so wer we ouerwhelmed wyth necessitie in the sighte of God, and næded altogither hys mercy. Wherefoꝛe as oure heauenly father did succoure vs in Chꝛiste Jesu fræly, euen so oughte we helpe oure neighbour fræly by oure bodye and by oure woꝛkes, and euery of vs must be made a certaine Chꝛiste eche to other, that wée maye be made the debtours of Chꝛiste, and that Chꝛiste may be one and the same in all, that is to saye, that wée maye be true Chꝛistians.

The glorie of a Christian life.

Who is able therefoꝛe to compꝛehende the riches and glozy of a Chꝛistian life, whiche is able to doe all thynges, possesseth al things, and néedeth nothing, an Empꝛesse and Conqueresse of sinne, death, and hell, and with all an handmaide neuertheless, seruiceable and pꝛofitable to all: but the moꝛe is the pitie: This Chꝛistian Justification is at this daye, altogither vnknowen in the whole woꝛlde,

woꝛlde, neyther is it pꝛeached, noꝛ pꝛocured, in so muche, that we are our selues ignoꝛaunt of oure name, and foꝛ what cause we be dæmed and called Chꝛistians. Tꝛue it is, we haue receiued our denomination of Chꝛiste, not beyng absent from vs, but dwelling wythin vs. That is to say, whiles we belæue in him, and be ioyntly and mutually a certain Chꝛist eche to other, applying oure selues to oure neighboures, euen as Chꝛiste hathe giuen himselfe to vs.

In vvha respect v be name Christia

But in these our dayes we are taught by mens doctrines to sæke after nought else but deseruings, and merites, and the things which ar our own, & haue made of Chꝛist nought else, but a sharp Lawmaker, much moꝛe austere than Moses was.

Semblably, the blessed virgin Mary did exhibite hir selfe a singular pꝛesidente of the Faith aboue al others, whiles after the manner of all other women she was purifyed accoꝛding to Moses Law (as it is set down in the 2. of Luke) wheras being

The h Mothe Christ exam Faith.

Luke. 2.

withstanding not bound to any such law, nor néeded to be purified in any such wyse, yet shée yelded hir selfe to the lawe of hir owne accorde, and of a frée loue vnto the law, being made lyke vnto other women, least shée might séeme to offende or despise them. Shée was not therefore made righteous for that worke, but being ryghteous before, shée dyd this déede freely, and without coactiō. In like maner ought our workes to be put in vre, not to the end to be iustified by them, for as muche as being iustified first by Faith, it behoueth vs to worke all thinges freely and cheerefully for our neyghbours sake.

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So also Paule did circumcise his scholer Timothée, not bicause Timothée néeded to be circumcised vnto righteousnesse: but least he might offende or despise the Iewes that were weake in Fayth, and which as yet were not capable of the frée dome of Fayth. But contrariwise, when as ỳ Iewes did vrge a necessitie to be circúcised to righteousnes, setting at naught

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the frædome of Faith, he did withstande them, and would not permitte Titus to be circumcised, Galath. 3. for as he woulde not willingly offend or contemne the imbecillitie or weakenesse of others in the Faith, applying himselfe to their capacitie for a time: so likewise, woulde he not giue place to the will of stiffenecked Iusticiaries, when the libertie of Fayth was like to suffer reproch, or be despised, kæping the midway, bearing with the weake for a season, and alwayes settyng himselfe againste the indurate, to the end he mighte conuert all in generaltie to embrace the libertie of Faith. With lyke affection must oure workes be employed, that we tollerate ỹ weakelings in Faith, as the Apostle teacheth in the. 14. to the Romaines, but that with courage wæ resiste the inflexible vrgers of workes, of the whiche we will treate more at large hereafter. Galath 5.

Likewise Christe in the. 17. of Mathew when tribute was demaunded of hys

Disciples, asked the question of Saincte Peter, whether the children of the Kingdome were exempte from paying Tribute, and Peter affyrming that they were, dyd commaunde hym notwithstandyng to goe to the Sea, speakyng these wordes, Least wee gyue them cause of offence, goe, and the Fishe that fyrste commeth to thy hands take, and opening hys mouth, thou shalte fynde a groate, take the same, and gyue it for thee and mee.

Thys example is very much anayleable for oure purpose. In the whyche, Chryste dothe call hymselfe and hys Disciples free, and Kynges sonnes, whyche stande in nede of nothyng, and yet of his owne accorde submitteth himselfe, and payeth Tribute.

Therefore, by how muche this worke of Chryste was necessarie to Chryste, and profitable vnto righteousnesse and saluation, euen so muche are all the

workes

wozkes of hys electe and faythfull a-
cayleable to righteousnesse, where-
as they bée all followyng after rygh-
teousnesse, and frélye perfourmed one-
lye to the necessitie and example of o-
thers.

Of the same condition are the wozkes prescribed by Paule in the thirténth Chapter to the Romaynes, and in the thyrde to Timothe, That menne shoulde bee subiecte to the hygher powers, and prepared to all good workes, not bycause they shoulde bée iustifyed thereby, where as they bée righteous alreadye through Fayth, but that by these they myghte both bée subiecte to o-thers, and to the hygher powers, and of a frée loue yéelde humblye obedience to theyr wyll in the frédome of the spi-rite.

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Of thys same sorte oughte the wozkes of all Colledges, Monasteries, and Priestes haue bëene employed,

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that euery of them mighte haue perfourmed the workes of their profession and estate to this ende, that by these euerye of them might exercise not righteousnesse but the taming of his owne bodie, yéelding thereby example to others, who haue themselues also néede to chastise their owne bodyes. Then also, that they mighte expresse humble obedience to others, applying themselues to their commandement, of a frée loue, hauing neuertheless a speciall regard alwayes to this onely, to witte, that through vayne confidence, none of them presume to be iustified, to merite, or to be saued by them, which thing is the proper and peculiar office of Faith only, as I haue often said before.

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Therefore, who so were furnished with this doctrine, might easily without daunger wade in these infinite impositions and traditions of the Pope, of Bishops, of Monckeries, of Churches, of Princes and Magistrates, the whiche some foolish pastors doe so obtrude vppon vs, as though they

they were of an vnauoydeable necessitie to be performed, for the obteyning of righteousnesse and saluation, calling them commonly the iniunctions of the Church, being in déede nothing lesse. For a Christian man maye debate with hymselfe on this wise, I will fast, I will pray, I wyll apply my selfe to all whatsoeuer is commanded by men, not bycause I néede to do anye of these, to procure righteousnesse or saluation by them: but bycause I will expresse mine obedience héerein to the Pope, to the Bishops, to the Potentate, and to the Magistrate, or to my neyghbour for erample sake, for this cause I will do and suffer al things, euen as Christ did worke and suffer manye greater things for my sake, whereof he néeded not to do any one, being made for my sake subiecte vnto the lawe, when as in déede he was not vnder the law. And although these things be exacted of me through the tyrannous forces, and iniurious tyrannie of ỹ Magistrates, yet shall they be no preiudice to me, so lõg

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as they be not against the glory of God.

The difference betwixt the good and the euill pastoures.

The premisses considered, it is an easie matter for any man to iudge certaynely, betwixt the difference of al works, and al lawes, & know skilfully who be blinde and witlesse Preachers, & who be true & faithfull pastoures. For whatsoeuer worke bee not directed to this only marke, namely, to be employed to ẏ chastisemẽt of ẏ body, or to ẏ dutiful cõsideration of ẏ neyghbour (so ẏ it enforce not any thing directly against Gods glory) surely ẏ work is neyther good nor Christianlike. And this is the cause, ẏ I feare me much, very few Colledges at all, any Monasteries, Altares, or any Ecclesiastical exercises at this day, be not truly Christian, & that also as well those proper & peculiar fastings, as ẏ petty prayers to certain Saints be not Christiã. I feare me much (I say) ẏ in al these things regard is had of naught else, but ẏ whiche appertaineth to oure selues, whiles we be thus minded, ẏ by meanes of these exercises, our sins are cleansed, & saluatiõ obteined therby, & so Christiã liberty is ouerthrowẽ, the cause wherof procedeth frõ blind ignorãce

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of ỹ true Chꝛistiã faith, ful of al frædome. Which grosse ignorãce & suppꝛession of liberty, very many blind & bussardly pastors doe earnestly mainteine, whilest they doe grædily persuade, & vꝛge ỹ people to suche exercises, aduãcing thẽ aboue Mone and Stars, & glorifying thẽ with their pardõs, but of faith, neuer vttering so much as one word. But I wold wish thée to be wel aduised, that if thou haue wil at any time to pꝛay, to fast, or to found Churches (as they tearme it) to beware thou do not thꝛs, to ỹ end to pꝛocure to thy self any tẽpoꝛal or euerlasting cõmodity therwith: for in so doing, thou shalt be pꝛeiudicial to thy Faith, which only doth minister all things vnto thée, & therfore ought only be attended vnto, ỹ it may be encreased, whether it be occupyed in worꝛkes, or exercised with afflictions: but giue frẽly without hope of requitall, whatsoeuer thou gẽeuest, ỹ others may be relæued, and growe in well doing through thée, and thy liberalitie, for this is the way to make thée a good and a true Chꝛistiã man. For what shal auayle thée, thy goodes, & thy worꝛkes, wherof thou art endu-

Good aduise.

Only Faith must be attended vnto.

endued with a surplus, ouer and besides those which do serue to the necessary chastisemente of the body: when as thou arte sufficiently enriched for thy necessities, through thy Faith, in the whiche God hath endued thée with all plentifull store.

Beholde, by this rule it behoueth vs to poure out eache vppon other, and to make common each vnto other the gwdes which we haue receyued of God, and that euery man cloath himselfe with his neyghbors estate, and so apply himselfe to his neighboures necessities, euen as if we were in ỹ like necessitie our selues: out of Christs storehouse they ouerflowed, and from him flowe dayly vnto vs, who hathe so taken our necessities vpon himselfe, and so performed all things for oure sakes, as if himselfe hadde bin the same that we be. They flowe likewise from vs, vnto them who stande in nede of them, in so muche, that I am bounde to poure out before God my Faith, and my righteousnesse, to couer and entreate for the sinnes of my

A rule touching brotherly loue.

neighbor.

neyghboure, the burthen of whose sinnes I must in my owne person susteyne, and so trauell and be affected in them, as if they were myne owne sinnes, for on thys wyse was Chryste afflicted for our sakes, for thys is the very true loue, thys is the rule of a pure Chrystian lyfe, whych is in them very naturall and pure in déede, in whome dwelleth a pure and sincere Faith in déede, wherevppon, the Apostle in the firste to the Corinthians, the thirtéene Chapter, dothe gyue thys singular pre- 1.Cor.13.
rogatiue to loue, That it seeketh not the things that are hir owne.

And therefore we doe conclude, that a Christian man dothe not lyue in hymselfe, but in Chryste, and in hys neyghboure, or that to be a Christian man, is to dwell in Chryste by Fayth, and in his neyghboure by loue.

A Christian man doth liue in himselfe, and in his neyghboure.

Againe, a Christian man is rayled vp aboue himselfe to Godwarde by Faith, and is throwen downe beneath himselfe, towarde hys neyghboure by loue, dwel-

ling alwayes neuertheleſſe in God, and in the loue of God, according to the ſaying of Chriſte in the fyrſte of Iohn, Verely verely I ſaye vnto you, from henceforth you ſhall ſee the Heauens opened, and the Angels of God aſcending and deſcending vpon the ſonne of man. And thus farre ſufficientlye concerning Chriſtian libertie, which is (as you ſée) ſpirituall and true, makyng oure hearres frée from all ſinnes, from all lawes, and commaundementes (as Paule witneſſeth in hys fyrſte Epiſtle to Timothe, the fyrſt Chapter, The Law was not made for the iuſt man) whyche libertie dothe as farre ſurmounte all other outwarde and erternall liberties in excellencie, as the Heauens dothe ſurpaſſe the Earthe, whyche Chryſte graunte vs to vnderſtande, and enioy to oure comforte Amen.

In fine, to ſatiſfy thoſe perſons, who can neuer heare any thing, be it neuer ſo well

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spoken, but that they wyll depraue it by euill conceyuing, somewhat must bée annexed, if that at the least they bée able to conceyue the same. There bée verye manye, who hearing the doctrine of thys Christian libertie of Fayth, wyll by and by take occasion thereof, to mayntayne the libertie of the flesshe, supposing forthwyth that they may lawfully attempte all thyngs, nor wyll expresse theyr libertie and Christianitie in anye one thyng else, than in despising, and reprouing of Ceremonies, of mennes traditions and constitutions, as though they oughte for thys cause to be déemed Christians, bycause they doe not fast in the dayes appoynted for fasting, or bycause they eate flesshe, whylest other doe abstayne from flesshe, or bycause they doe not frequente Masses and Mattens, or other vsuall seruice in the Churche, disdeynefullye skorning and skoffyng

Against the libertie of the flesh.

at the ordinance of men, vtterly settyng at naught all other things apperteyning to Christian Religion. Againste whome, there is another sorte that do with teeth & nayle bende theyr force, whiche contrarywise, do endeauour to atteyne saluation, by the only obseruation and reuerence of Ceremonies, as though they shoulde for this cause be saued, bycause they fast on the fasting dayes, or absteyne from flesh, or enure themselues to certaine prayers, excessiuely vaunting the traditions of the Church, and of the fathers, yet otherwise not estéeming the things that are proper and peculiar to oure Christian Fayth, worth a rushe, both whyche sortes of people are surely altogyther much blameworthy, for as much, as passing ouer matters of greater importance, and carelessly neglecting the things necessarily belonging to saluation, they turmoyle thēselues in so greate outrage aboute those trifling toyes, being altogither vnnecessarie and vnprofitable:

Against the confidence in vvorkes.

How

How much more soundly dothe Paule teache to kéepe the midde way, condemning both those bypathes, saying, He that eateth, lette hym not despise hym that eateth not: and he that eateth not, lette hym not iudge him that eateth. Héere you sée, that such as do neglect, and condemne the ceremonies, not of deuotion, but of mére contempte, be accompted blame-worthy, whereas the Apostle teacheth them not to despise, for knowledge dothe cause to swell, and to be puft vp. Againe, he exhorteth the obstinate, that they iudge not others, for neyther of them doe obserue charitie, edifying one another, wherefore in thys perplexitie, councell must bée sought out of Scripture, whiche dothe teache vs, not to decline on the right, nor on the lefte hande, but to ensue the ryghte iudgementes of the Lorde, quickning the heartes: for as no man is righteous, bycause hée humbleth hymselfe, and is addicted to workes, and rytes of Ceremonies, so neyther shall anye man bée accompted

for thys onely cause righteous, bycause hée dothe omitte and contemne them.

For wée bée not frée de through oure Faith in Christe from workes, but from the opinions of workes, that is to saye, from the foolishe presumption conceyued of Justification, purchased by meanes of workes: for Faith dothe redéeme oure consciences, dothe orderlye kéepe and preserue the same, whereby we atteyne thys knowledge, that righteousnesse consisteth not in workes, albeit workes neyther can, nor ought to be neglected. As wée can not liue in this worlde, without foode and sustenance, nor without the generall preseruation of this mortall bodye, yet is not oure righteousnesse settled in these, but in Faith, for the whyche, the other things notwithstanding maye not bée despised, and vtterlye shaken off. So in this worlde, wée bée fast chayned to the necessarie preseruation of the lyfe of this body, yet are wée not thereby made righteous, My

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Kingdome (sayeth Christe) is not from hence, nor of thys Worlde, but he sayde not, my Kingdome is not here, nor in this worlde. Likewise Paule, Albeit we walke in the flesshe, yet our warfare is not according to the flesshe. And in the fyrste to the Galathians, Whereas I doe liue in the flesshe, I liue in the Faith of the sonne of God. Euen so in this that we worke that we liue, and that wée are exercised in workes and Ceremonies, the necessitie of this presente life, and the carefull regarde of gouerning our bodyes, dothe exacte it of vs, yet are we neuer a deale righteous by them, but in the Faith of the Sonne of God. Therefore, a Christian man must kéepe hys course in the midde way, and must passe away from those two sortes of people, for eyther he shall méete wyth those peruerse frowardes béeyng indurate wyth these Ceremonies, whyche lyke deafe Serpentes will not hearken vnto the libertie of the truth, but magnifye theyr

Galath. 5

How we ought to deale with the obstinate.

Aspides.

Ceremonies, commaund and enforce the obseruation of them without Faith, as necessities of Iustification, suche as the Iewes were in times past, vnwilling to come to knowledge thereby, to walke arighte. Suche behoueth vs to resist, to impugne them, and to offend them stoutelye, least by this theyr wicked opinion, they draw togither wyth themselues manye, into theyr false illusions. In the presence of such it is conuenient to eate flesh, to breake fasting dayes, and for the maintenãce of our libertie in Faith, to do other lyke thyngs, whyche they recken in place of mosse grieuous sinnes. And in thys manner must wee speake of them, Lette them alone, they be blynde themselues, and blynde guydes of the blynde, for in thys respect Paule woulde not suffer Titus to receyue Circumcision, though they stiffely vrged hereunto. So did Chryste also defende his Apostles, when as they pluckt the eares of corne on the Sabboth day, and many such like.

On the otherside, wee shal meete with ỹ simple, vnlearned, ignorant, and weake in Faith (as Paul calleth them) whose capacities are not yet able to comprehende this libertie of Faith, though they haue a will therevnto. Suche must be borne withall, least they be offended: and their weakenesse must be fauoured, vntill they may be more fully instructed. For whereas those persons do not obserue suche ceremonies of any grounded malice, nor are wilfully obstinate in iudgement, but conceiue of them according to the imbecilitie of their Faith onelye, fastings, abstinence from choice meates, and suche other ceremonies, whiche they do suppose to be necessarie, muste be obserued for auoyding offence in them. For this doth Charitie exacte of vs, which hurteth no man but helpes all. For suche continue not weaklings throughe their owne defaulte, but through the negligence of their pastors, which with their cramps and grapling yrons of traditions, haue entangled, euil handled, and deadly woũded

The simple

them, who otherwise ought to haue bene deliuered, made whole, and reuiued with the doctrine of Faith and Christian Libertie. The same doeth the Apostle teach in the fourtenth Chapiter to the Rom. If my meate doe offende my brother, I will not eate flesh for euer. And againe, I knowe that in Christe there is nothing defyled, but vnto him that thinketh it to bee defyled, but it is euill to the man that eateth to the offence of hys brother.

Rom. 14.

Therefore, although wee muste stoutly withstande those teachers of Traditions, and sharpely inueighe againste the constitutions of Bishoppes, wherewith they ouerrunne the people of God, yet regarde must be had of the timorous weaklings, whome those cruell bloudsuckers, do cruelly deteine captiue with those traditions, vntill they be set at libertie. On this wise encounter manfully against the Wolues, but for the Sheepe, and not against the Sheepe also, which thou shalt

Against the wyues and wymakers

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the better do, if thou bēd thy force earnestly against those Lawes and Lawmakers, and yet withall thy selfe obserue them in the sighte of the weake, least they become offended throughe thée, vntill themselues maye knowe that Tiranny, and vnderstande their owne liberties. And if thou wilte enioy thine owne libertie, vse it to thy selfe in secrete (as Paule teacheth thée in the fourtēnth to the Rom.) Keepe thou the Faith whiche thou haste vnto thy selfe before God, but beware that thou vse it not before the weake. Againe, before Tirantes and obstinate frowardes vse the same in despighte of them, yea, and that moste manfully and constantly: That they also maye vnderstande their owne wickednesse, and their Lawes to be nothing auaileable to righteousnesse, as also that they hadde no authoritie to make suche lawes. Rom. 14.

For as muche therefore, as the societie of thys present lyfe cannot be maintained in due order wout ceremonies & workes: To the yong in yeares.

yea

Yea rather, forasmuch as the raging and rude age of yong persons hathe nede to be restreined and brideled with suche raines, as it were with a Snaffle, and that euerie man ought to chastise his own body: with the same exercises, it behouech therefore the Minister of Christe to be prudent and faithfull, that he maye so enstructe and guide Christes flocke in all these thinges, that their Conscience and Faith may not be offended, and to be circumspect, that no vnsauerie opinion, nor bitter smatche of loathsomnesse maye take rote in them, by meanes whereof, manye may be infected, (wherof Paule did forewarne ỹ Hebrues) that is to saye, leaste losing their faith vtterly, they beginne to be defiled with vaine presumption of workes, as thoughe they were to be saued by workes, whiche is a spedie contagion, and doth pierce depely into many, vnlesse Faith be busily and seriously enforced withall, but the disease is vnauoydeable, where Faith being put vp to silence, onely traditions of men taughte

to be reteined, as hathe bẽn hitherto thorough the pestiferous, detestable, and soule seying traditions of oure Prelates, and vagarant opinions of oure Diuines, haling infinite soules to the Diuell, wyth these intricate fetters, whiche by plaine demonstration doeth denounce verie Antechrist himselfe.

To conclude, suche as is powertie in abundaunce, painefulnesse in authoritie, humblenesse in honour, abstinence in feasting, chastitie in dalliaunce, euen so righteousnesse of Faith is daungerously beset being ioined with ceremonies: May a man carry fyre in his bosome (sayth Salomon) and not burne his garmentes? And yet as in riches, in authoritie, in honours, in dalliaunce, in banquetings, so muste we be conuersaunte in Ceremonies, that is to saye, in daungers: yea rather as it is nedfull for yong boyes to be noursed and cherished in the laps and armes of maidens leaste they perishe, in whome being growen to riper yeares, were no small perill

Daunger the ceremonies.

of

of safetie to frequent the company of maidens: Euen so is it requisite to loce vp the raunging yeres of licencious youth within the Cloysters, yea within yron closets of suche ceremonies and exercises wheras they may be restrayned and abyde correction, leaste their insolent courage drewe them headlong into wickednesse. Whiche ceremonies doncuertheleſſe procure death vnto them, if they perseuer in opinion to be iustifiable by them, whereas they ought rather to be enstructed, that they were clogged with such restrainte, not for any suche cause as to be made righteous, or to merite much thereby, but to the end, they shoulde not rushe wilfully into vices, and so be the more tractable trayned to the righteousnesse of Faith: whiche they would in no wise endure through the outrage of their youth, vnlesse the same had bene tamed and brought lowe.

vvhat imation emonies

Which doth argue, that ceremonies oughte not to be of anye other price and estimation

estimation in the life of a true Christian man, than as amongst Carpenters and Artificers, certayne olde postes logges or platformes, are framed to direct & raise vp buyldings by: whiche be not made to the ende they shoulde serue and remayne to anye speciall vse, but bycause without suche by-helpes, buyldyngs and worke̅s can not easilye be rayſed, for when the work or building is finished, those deuises are layde aside.

So that here you see, that ceremonies are not vtterlye abrogated, but rather earnestlye requyred, but the vaine perswasion and presumption of them: is contemned, bycause no man accompteth them to be a true and permanent buylding. If anye manne woulde bee so notablye senseleſſe, as to regarde nothyng elſe in hys whole life, but to directe those preparatiues, wyth all honoure, wyth all diligence, wyth all continuaunce and woulde neuer bende

his

his cogitations to the verye building it
selfe, stroking, smoothing, and vaunting
himselfe in these preparatiues, and vaine
rotten proppes, would not all men lament
his madnesse, and thinke within them-
selues, that whiles he employed this cost
to no purpose, he might haue builded some
matter of better substaunce? So now we
do neither abandon ceremonies, nor wor-
kes, but rather doe allowe them, neuerthe-
lesse we do vtterly abhorre the vaine opi-
nion conceiued of them, leaste that anye
manne persuade himselfe, that to observe
them is the true righteousnesse, as Hypo-
crites doe, whiche doe abuse and mispend
their whole life, in these exercises, & neuer
reach vnto the substance, in respect where-
of they are practized, or as ỹ Apostle spea-
keth: Alwayes learning, and neuer com-
ming to the knowledge of the Truth: For
they seeme as thoughe they hadde a will to
builde, and alwayes prepare themselues
thereunto, and yet they neuer builde, per-
sisting alwayes in the glittering shadow

of

of godlynesse, but neuer attaine to the power and substance thereof.

Yet do they wonderfullye flatter themselues in these exercises, presuming also arrogantly to iudge al others, whom they see not glittering in the like brauerie of workes, whereas they might otherwise be able to atchieue matters of greater importaunce, to the singular comforte of themselues and others, with this vainely imployed ostentation, and abuse of Gods giftes, if they were endued with a right and true Faith. But whereas the nature of man and reason (as they tearme it) natural, is naturallye enclyned to superstition, and pursuing al Lawes and workes, is prone of hyr selfe to fall into vaine presumptiõ of obtayning iustificatiõ through them: adds moreouer hereunto, bycause it is accustomed and enured to conceyue so highlye of the same workes, through the vsuall admiration of all earthly lawmakers, it is not possible surelye of hyr

Against them that be not superstitious

owne strength, to cleare it selfe from this seruile bondage of workes, and to bende hyr force to knowe the libertye of Faith.

Therfore it is requisite, that we flie to prayer, that the Lorde woulde vouchsafe to drawe vs and make vs instructed vnto GOD, that is to saye, apte Schollers for God, and that himselfe wil vouchsafe to write hys Lawe in our heartes (as he hath promised) otherwyse we doe all come to confusion. For except he doe engraffe in our soules this marvellous Wisedome hidden in a misterie, Nature can not chose but condemne it, and adiudge it for an Heretique, because she is offended in it, and appeareth foolishe in hir eyes. Euen as we salve to have happned in tymes passe to the Prophets of GOD and the Apostles, and euen as the wicked blynde Prelates, and theyr false flatterers doe nowe vnto mée, and others lyke vnto mée, vnto whome

and

From whence the Lavv of vvisedome doth proceede.

and to vs also, GOD bee mercifull, and shewe the lyghte of hys counte-vpon vs, that we maye knowe his waye vpon the earth, and his sauing health amongst all generations. Who be blessed for euer and euer. Amen.

FINIS.

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